



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

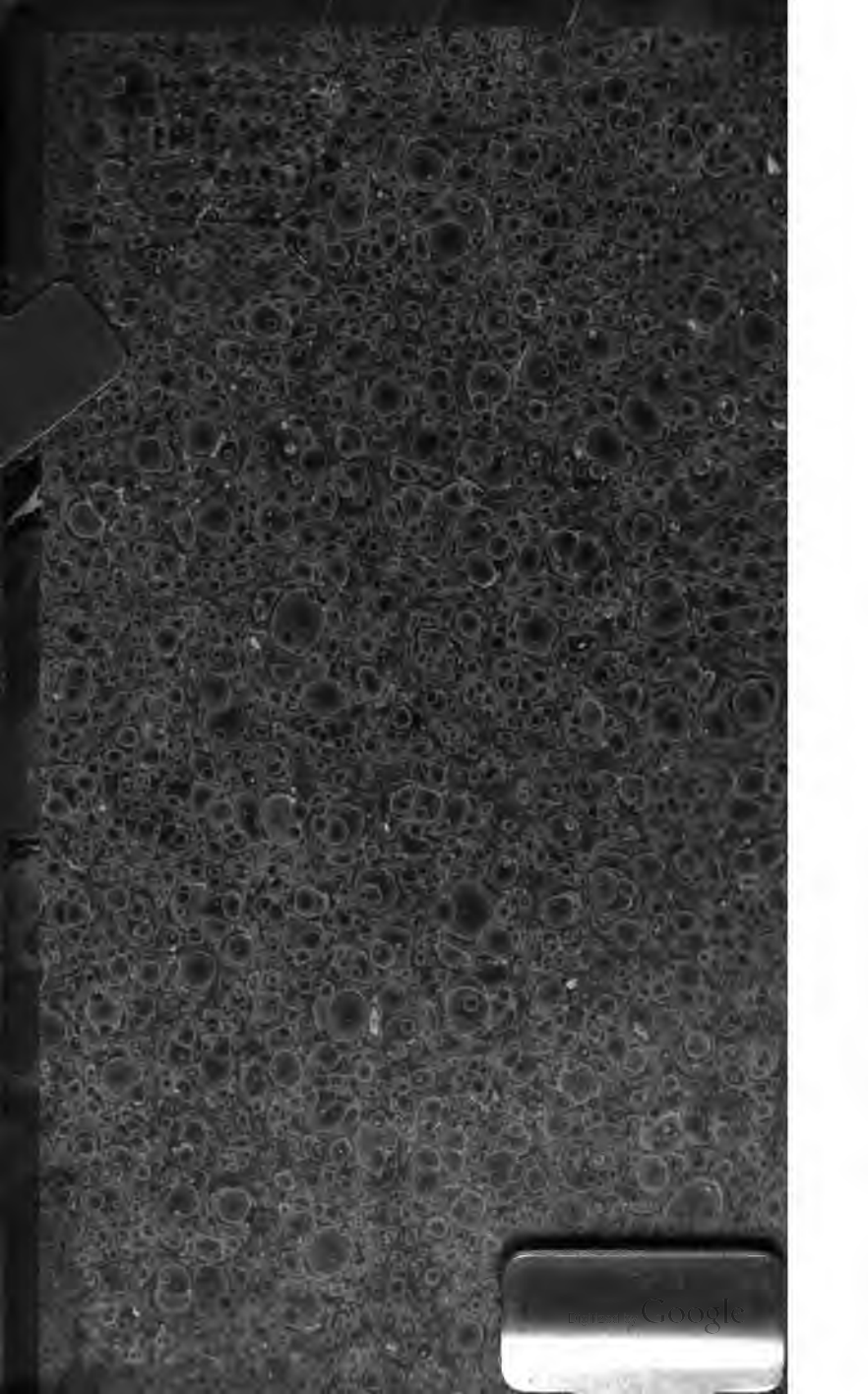
We also ask that you:

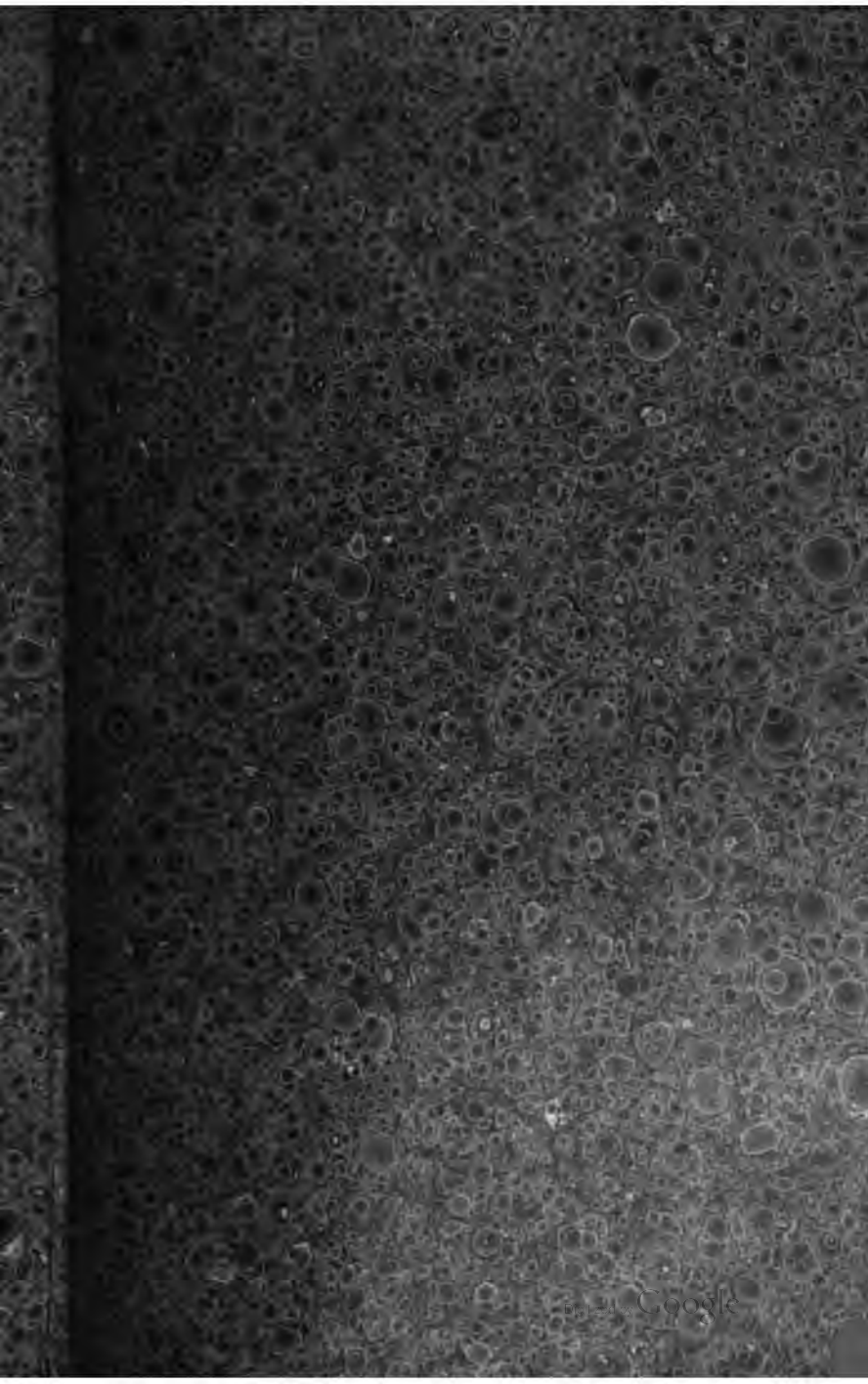
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>







A. Eugene Tollesworth

over April 1878.

A R T H U R C O N W A Y;

OR,

SCENES IN THE TROPICS.

BY CAPTAIN MILMAN,

LATE H. M. 33RD REGIMENT.

AUTHOR OF "THE WAY-SIDE CROSS," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

COLBURN AND CO., PUBLISHERS,

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1851.

LOAN STACK

LONDON:

Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.

955
M658
art
v. 3

ARTHUR CONWAY.

CHAPTER I.

FRANÇOIS is seated on a sofa with Rosalie, his arm round her waist ; she is leaning on his shoulder, whilst the gentle Marguerite relates, as well as she can, all that the reader has been already made acquainted with, passing as lightly as she can over the coming of the negroes, and the fearful scene before the rude altar in the forest, until the appearance of the Carib Chief. And then she passed to other matters, which, although not very interesting in themselves, must be narrated for the development of this eventful history.

VOL. III.

B

Marguerite had instantaneously recognised the Carib Chief by his dress, and singular appearance. She knew that he was Arthur's friend, and they were saved. Her first impulse was, naturally, to thank God for the almost miraculous interposition of these half-naked savages, when all seemed lost. There was something absolutely awful in the suddenness and silence of their attack, for the moment imparting an idea of supernatural agency, when, in truth, it was but the method of warfare practised by the Caribs for a series of ages ; but Marguerite knew not this, and to her the hand of God was visible, and to Him she knelt before the rude altar.

Then she would have thanked the Carib Chief, but when she held out her hand to him, he turned away and veiled his eyes with his arm, and, as we have related, went up to Marinier.

Marguerite was surprised, and at first a little frightened at this, but she soon remembered

that the Carib had acted precisely in the same manner at La Belle Etoile, when he had come to warn Arthur of the ambuscade set for him.

"It is their custom," said François, turning to Marguerite; "they are particularly jealous of their own women, and naturally suppose that we are the same. It was simply a delicate action; they are susceptible of the strongest feelings of revenge and friendship. Gratitude to Captain Conway for a kind act, has made this Carib his devoted friend."

Marguerite blushed deeply, and was silent.

François saw that he was treading on dangerous ground, so he continued gravely :

"There is something very remarkable in the demeanour of this man. He would not act in person for us, nor against us; yet, he has served us both well, and faithfully, still, I do not quite understand him; his motive is unknown to me, unless it is this. The Carib despises, and yet hates the negroes, and all

coloured men. He knew, by instinct or information, that they were going to rise, and commit atrocities against the whites, and he thought to find favour, both with French and English, by acting against them."

"What have we not, under God, to thank him for, dear François?" said Rosalie, timidly. She had scarcely dared to look up once during Marguerite's recital.

"Rosalie, dear Rosalie," whispered François tenderly in her ear. "Be merciful; can you think, that after this, it is possible for me to disbelieve in a divine Providence?"

"You make me happy, oh! so happy, dear François," she murmured, with a gentle pressure of the hand.

Marguerite was much pleased to see a soft, tranquil, happy look displace the mournful sadness of her sister's countenance. She had feared for her reason, for Rosalie had scarcely spoken, but in broken phrases, since the

startling appearance of the mulatto, Lemantin, at the door of the boudoir, and in her presence she had neither smiled nor wept.

“I shall leave you now, dearest,” said the fair creole, rising, and disengaging herself from her lover’s arms. Then stooping over Marguerite, she whispered: “Tell him all, dear sister, how we have suffered; it will soften his heart, it is already touched. I shall go weep and pray.”

François did not attempt to detain her; he saw that she could scarcely bear a repetition, even in words, of the terrible ordeal she had so lately passed through, and he was quite satisfied, that he had not only not lost ground, but gained it. She still loved him; there had been nothing to lessen her affection for him, but much to augment it.

And now he was absolutely impatient to hear further from Marguerite; to hear, and then to act: he felt instinctively that there was much for him to do.

“ Our poor Rosalie has suffered greatly, and, alas ! I fear much of it may be laid to me,” he said, in a low tone. “ Had I acted differently, had I not been a fool, a madman, all this might have been spared to her, and to you ; but I will make amends (though I cannot recall what has happened), I will strive to make an atonement for my folly, if a life of devotion can be a hecatomb for a few days of such suffering.”

“ You must be gentle and tender with her, my friend : she has, indeed, suffered much more than any woman but a martyr has undergone. You must show, by your life, that you are worthy of her.”

“ I will, I will,” said François, solemnly ; “ but go on, dear Marguerite, with your sad history.”

Marguerite continued :

“ It was some time before our poor Rosalie recovered from her fainting fit, and when she opened her eyes, she closed them again immediately, with an expression of horror, muttering : ‘ The mulatto ! the mulatto ! ’ ”

François ground his teeth together, and uttered between them something that sounded very like a curse.

“Hush !” said Marguerite, gently. “He is dead ; he has gone before his Maker with his sins unrepented of. We should pray for his soul.”

“You are so good, so gentle, and yet so courageous, Marguerite.”

“Do not interrupt me, and do not praise me, or I fear I shall not be able to tell you what happened next. And pray do not look at me,” she added, simply, “or I am quite sure I shall not.”

Then she continued her history :

“When Rosalie recovered sufficiently to move, we retired a little distance from the fearful spot, to a rude couch of reeds and fern leaves, which the Caribs had constructed for us, under the shadow of a carob-tree, and presently, the white man in the priest’s robe,

whom the mulatto had named Marinier, again approached us."

François would have spoken at the sound of that name, but Marguerite gave him an imploring look, and he forbore.

"I turned from him with disgust and loathing, a white man, a priest, leagued with such monsters, was a hideous reptile.

"He perceived it, and said, in a mournful tone: 'You will not hear me; but hearken, daughter, I have much to say.'

" 'How can I trust,' I replied, indignantly, 'to a secret malignant enemy; to one who has desecrated his holy office, to one who has joined with fiends in wicked deed, to injure those who have never injured him? Why do you persecute us, man? what harm have we ever done to you?' I could not help it, if it was spoken bitterly, for my feelings overcame me.

" 'I am no priest, maiden,' he replied; 'neither is it I who persecute you. It is one

far more powerful than I; I am but his agent.'

" ' May God forgive you for your deceit and wickedness, cruel man ! See what you have done,' and I pointed to the pale and agitated Rosalie.

" ' Yes,' he continued, speaking quickly, as if afraid I should not have patience to hear him ; ' yes, it was I who seduced the soldiers ; it was I who endeavoured to set Le Blanc against him ; it was I who made a tool of the rough sailor. I watched you at the waterfall. It was I who wrote the false letter to you, to ruin him in your estimation. It was I who placed the ambuscade at the rocky pass, to catch him, dead or alive, on his return from La Belle Etoile. It was I, who, finding these things of no avail, fanned the fire in the heart of the mulatto, Lemantin, until it blazed out fiercely at La Belle Etoile. He was necessary to me, and I used him, regardless of all others. It was I who planned this marriage in the forest, that, seeing

you wedded, he might die slowly of a broken heart. It was you, maiden, and you alone, I plotted against, for this. As for yon trembler, she might have been spared, but for the mulatto, Lemantin, who was bent on carrying her off, and I could not do without him.'

"I listened to this horrible confession, mute and trembling.

"He fixed his keen, black eyes on me, and for a moment I shrank from them.

"Then he continued: 'Mark, Miss Gordon, all this I confess I have done, and more; but, tell me, is it the instrument of torture the sufferer curses, or him who orders it? I am the instrument, but he who has directed it is far away: I have worked for him until my use has gone; I have failed, and he will cast me away.'

" 'To what does this tend?' I inquired, wishing that this frightful conversation might end.

" 'Do you not love this young man, Arthur

Conway, with your whole heart?' he asked, abruptly; 'and does he not love you? I know it. Has no portion of his previous history been revealed to you in your loving intercourse? Has he never hinted at a fearful mystery that he would unravel?'

"I could not reply. He answered for himself: 'There has. Tell him, then, that he must seek me, if he would hear a secret. My life is in his hands; he must purchase it. It is little for him to give, but I ask no more. I will not tell it whilst I am a prisoner.'

" 'Are you not free, then, to come and go?' I asked, I hardly know why.

" 'No, maiden, I am in the power of the Caribs. Even now their keen eyes are watching me closely, although you see them not. Their bows are bent, and, were I to attempt flight, a dozen arrows would pierce me.'

" 'And yet you are unbound?'

" 'Still I am a prisoner; and I tell you more, it was the chief of these savages who desired me

to do what I wanted—to speak to you. They cannot, or will not, address a white woman: they look upon her as a superior being,’—this was said with a bitter sneer, —‘ nor will they injure me, being a white man, and not having injured them; but they will deliver me up as a conspirator. Let them do so, but it must be to no other than Captain Conway. It is in your power, maiden; and I tell you, that he would give worlds to know what I know, and will tell him when I am a free agent.’

“ ‘ And you would betray your employer, adding treachery to treachery?’ I said, indignantly.

“ ‘ Not so; my service is at an end: I do but seek a new master.’

“ ‘ How is it in my power?’ I said; for I felt that there was truth in part of what he said. I knew that Captain Conway had a mystery to clear up, and I could not throw a chance away, for his sake.

“ ‘ Captain Conway is by this time at Ro-

croix, and the Carib wishes to know whither you would go?’

“ ‘Where are we now?’ I inquired; for I knew not.

“ ‘Nearly in the centre of the island.’

“ ‘We must go to Roseau.’

“ ‘Then I am lost, and my secret perishes with me,’ he said, bitterly. ‘And this is your love! It is thus you show it!’

“ He paused, and his words affected me keenly. Then I reflected, and remembered that my kind old uncle’s place was near Rocroix. I felt that we were quite safe, as long as we were in the hands of the friendly Carib Chief and his band.

“ ‘Be it so,’ I replied, briefly; ‘we will go to the plantation called the Carse of Gowrie. It is near Rocroix. Tell the Captain Baron so. Now leave me.’

“ The man bowed low, and would have thanked me; but I waved him off, somewhat impatiently. He retired slowly out of sight, with his arms folded, and his eyes bent upon the

ground. When he was gone, I felt relieved, and yet I began to wish that I had questioned him further. I had the more time to reflect, for, on turning to Rosalie, I found she had fallen into a gentle sleep. I now began to find the heat oppressive, and it made me weary and feverish, and inclined to rest; but my thoughts would not let me. I became anxious and restlessly-curious to learn what the secret was.

“Shortly after this, one of the Caribs, not the Chief, approached with averted face, and placed on the ground, near my feet, some sweet limes and other fruit, a baked cake of maize, and some heads of green Indian corn; and was about to retire, as he had approached, when I spoke. At the sound of my voice, he stopped, and raised his hand to his ear, and moved his head, to show that he was listening; but did not look.

“I had often heard Arthur say that the best method of addressing the Caribs was in the third person, so I said: ‘One maiden, see,

is sleeping—the other speaks for both. The white maidens thank the Caribs: they are very good; they have saved them from the cruel negroes. The maidens are grateful—can they do anything for the Carib, when they get to Rocroix?’

“The man evidently did not understand much of what I said, for he murmured, in a low voice: ‘Si si Rocroix.’

“‘The white maiden wishes to speak to the Chief: will he not come?’

“‘No Chief: les Caribes all same.’

“‘Le Baron, I mean.’

“‘He dere. Les Caraibes no talkee con muges.’

“‘And Marinier?’

“‘Him gone.’

“‘Good God! you do not mean to say that he has escaped?’ I exclaimed. ‘Carib, he is our bitterest enemy.’

“‘Si si sabé dat. Plenty Carib go too, Inglees Captain.’

"I understood him, the Caribs had carried off Marinier, as a prisoner, for Arthur.

"'It is far to Rocroix, and the maidens are weak: how are they to get there?'

"'See—Caraibes got mulos. No can hablar, mas; too mosh talkee.'

"I saw that the savage was anxious to be gone, though he still stood there with averted face, so I said:

"'The maiden thanks the Carib. Tell Le Baron, when the sun is low, the maidens will ride the mules to Rocroix.'

"'Good!' replied the man, with a sort of acquiescing grunt, and he moved slowly, yet gracefully, away, without ever once having looked at me even stealthily.

"I will pass over our ride," continued Marguerite, "though, at any other time, it would have been highly interesting, and, perhaps, a little ludicrous. I had to assist poor Rosalie to mount the mule, and then to scramble up on my own as well as I could, for the Caribs would

not touch even the hem of our garments. At night they constructed huts for us of twigs and large leaves, and brought us more cakes and fruit, but I could not induce any of them to speak to me. They were, however, very kind and attentive to all our wants. The silence of the night in the deep forest was very startling, but I had a sense of security, for I was aware that the Caribs were lying in a circle round us, and there was not any probability of their keen senses being taken by surprise. At length, I fell into a deep and tranquil sleep.

* * * * *

“The route must have been extremely circuitous, for we did not arrive here till yesterday evening, when our good overseer informed me that a battle had taken place near Rocroix, that the English had been completely victorious, and that a wounded French officer was lying ill in this house. This he wisely concealed, until poor Rosalie, worn out with fatigue and suffering, had retired to rest.

“I was uneasy on many accounts, and could not follow her until I learnt more. So I had an interview with the Irish soldier. He recognised me in a moment, and actually blessed me from head to foot. He gave me an account of the fight, which I will not distress you with—how Arthur had set out to take care of us. Then he described you accurately, adding, ‘that you were the Captain’s friend, that you had lost a little blood, but were in no sort of danger,’ so that I had no difficulty in recognising you. So this morning, when Rosalie awoke, I thought I might safely gladden her wounded spirit, by informing her of the joyful tidings.

“When she heard that you had been wounded, nothing could persuade her that you were not dying; so she dressed hastily and went to see you.”

“It was no dream, then, and she was there,” muttered François. “Confound that fellow, Tom Connolly, and his docther in petticoats!”

"And now that I have told you all," said Marguerite, rising, "I must leave you and go to Rosalie."

"And I must see the Captain Baron."

* * * * *

François went out into the verandah and called Tom Connolly.

"Are any of the Caribs hereabouts?"

"What's them, your honour?"

"Pshaw! Are any of the men here who brought the ladies about the house?"

"Only one, Sir; and he won't darken the doors, though he's dark enough."

"Do you know where he is?"

"Yes, Sir; the dark chap is taking it easy, smoking his dudeen under them quare threes with the big leaves, on which the phaties grow. This way, your honour." And Tom led the young Frenchman into the garden, and there, sure enough, was a man, stretched at full length, smoking a short pipe, under a large plantain-tree..

It was the Captain Baron.

When he saw François, he jumped at once on his feet, and, taking his hand, kissed it, but did not speak. He looked at Tom Connolly.

"Strange!" thought François, "how loath they are to speak before a third person. Had not Rosalie been asleep, Marguerite would not have extracted a single word from the Carib."

Connolly, however, soon took himself off.

"Now, Le Baron, how can his brother sufficiently thank him for what he has done?"

"Le Baron does not wish thanks. He has but kept his promise with both his brothers."

"Ah! he has, indeed, done well to save the maidens—his brother's love, from the cruel negroes."

The Carib spat upon the ground. "The negroes are hogs, and the filthy mulatto led herd. The Caribs shot them down with their arrows. They fell screaming, like the parrots from the trees. It is good."

"But tell me ; how came Le Baron to know of Lemantin, and his cursed treachery ?"

"The Carib has long ears, he hears sounds in the air ; but this was told in his ear. His brother, the English Captain, whispered : ' Kill the negroes ! Kill Lemantin ! Save the sweet flowers from the filthy hogs.' Le Baron say : ' Good—by-and-by.' "

"His brother was heard. Le Baron was only just in time to save the maidens."

"That true," replied the Carib, with great simplicity ; "Le Baron could not go till his enemy die."

"Ha ! you mean the rough sailor, the Master of the transport. You have killed him, then ? Well, no matter ; he was a double-dyed traitor."

"See, Carib no kill him—he die," said Le Baron in English, with the faintest attempt at a chuckle. "Le Baron promised his English brother not to touch the sailor, but sailor die all the same. When he was dead, Le Baron

went to La Belle Etoile. When he got there—negroes all gone—the house all on fire—Caribs look all round. They have the eyes of hawks. The negroes left a broad trail, see!”

And he laid two arrows nearly at right angles on the grass, indicating the separate route taken by the two bodies of negroes.

“Many gone down towards La Maison Vide. Brother know that place?”

François nodded assent; he remembered it but too well.

The Carib continued: “Few gone towards the mountains, across little savannah. Le Baron look close; see, small feet under the mangrove-trees. Then he pick up knife, look. Mulatto dog, Lemantin. See mule feet, too. The maiden gone up the mountains. Le Baron tell El Duque stay behind. Watch other negroes. Rest of Caribs come with Le Baron—plenty.” Here he held up both his hands twice, with his fingers spread, to indicate twenty. “Negroes few, bout one hand. They go slow, and

leave a broad trail. Caribs go quick, find them by the gushing well, Carib know the place. Dirty hogs think themselves safe, no one look out. Caribs all drawn round make a little ring. No speak. By-and-by, mulatto turn to seize white maiden; she scream, and fall down. Beastly mulatto slave, touch white maiden. No! The arrow of Le Baron go straight—pierce his eye. Then all die but white man. Caribs no kill white man when do Caribs no harm.”

“Does Le Baron know who this white man was?” asked Le Blanc, anxiously.

“Marinier,” briefly responded the Chief.

“What was he doing there?”

“Carib cannot tell. He saw dirty negroes : kill them. Save brother’s maiden; that all.”

“Where is Marinier? Is he safe?” asked François, even more anxiously.

“Does his brother know the Carib’s cliff? Marinier is there.”

The young Frenchman looked at the Carib in horror and dismay.

Had he killed Marinier.

The Carib's cliff. He had not seen it ; but its terrible name was well known to him.

It was an awful, frowning, perpendicular rock, with the deep blue ocean rolling at its base, down which the Caribs were wont to precipitate their women, upon even the slightest suspicion of infidelity. There were even worse and more horrible rumours about it, for on it, it was said, the Caribs used, of old, if not in later times, to hold their devilish rites over human carcasses, nay, even over the quivering, and yet warm limbs of their enemies. Whether the reports were true or false, the Carib's cliff had a fearful reputation.

"O, Chief!" said François, gloomily ; "if you have killed this man, I fear you have undone much of the good you have wrought for us."

Le Baron only understood the first part of this speech. The second person puzzled him, but he replied, gravely and slowly, as if he wished his words to make an impression on François : "Marinier is not dead. The Caribs

keep him for the English Captain. But if the English Captain dies, Marinier must die, too. The cliff is very high."

"But, Le Baron, Captain Conway is all right. He left Rocroix yesterday morning, to return to Roseau. Nothing is likely to happen to him ; his brother is not sick."

The Chief shook his head. "Le Baron does not know. The English Captain went to seek the slavish negroes ; they are many ; they have muskets ; his brother is very brave, he may meet a bullet ; then Marinier must die."

"That is just, Carib ; but till then, no harm will happen to Marinier."

"His brother speaks the truth."

"Hist ! Le Baron. Listen ! Marinier must not die, even if the English Captain should fall, until his brother, Le Blanc, has spoken to this Marinier. Does Le Baron understand ?"

"Marinier will not die until Le Baron says so," said the Carib, haughtily.

"I suppose I must rest satisfied with this

assurance," thought Le Blanc, pausing at this proud speech. "I must flatter this savage a little, I see. Le Baron is powerful—he knows much ; he is brave ; he kills the negroes as easy as the ground-doves, or the ramiers on the branches. What humming-bird has whispered in his ear that the English Captain has gone to slay the filthy hogs ?"

The Carib's soft eye lighted up with a strange expression, and he said, in his sweet, musical voice :

"The Caribs are nimble of foot ; they run unseen amidst the forests, like the agouties ; they climb to the tops of the trees and the pointed rocks like monkeys ; they have eyes like the far-sighted hawks ; they smell the negroes afar, like the Johnny-crows ; they creep everywhere, like the ants. The red soldiers have gone towards La Belle Etoile ; they will find the Caribs' mark ; they will follow the broad trail by the sea-shore. His brother, whom the Carib loves, will miss his dove ; her nest is burnt ; she

has flown ; or she is killed. He is brave. Will he rest till he has killed the negroes ?”

The Chief paused, quite out of breath.

“ I cannot disbelieve him,” thought the young Frenchman ; “ his information is, no doubt, correct ; his men are everywhere, and their motions so secret and rapid, that indeed no one knows whence and when they come, or whither they go.”

Le Baron was evidently tired with his unusually long conversation, for, perhaps, in the whole course of his life, he had never uttered so many consecutive words.

He relit his pipe, and again stretched himself at full length, under the plantain-tree.

“ Will Le Baron answer his brother one more question ?” said Le Blanc, gently.

The Chief uttered a kind of groan—it was a token of weary assent.

“ Will Le Baron know when the English Captain returns to Roseau ?”

Another groan from the Chief.

“Will Le Baron tell his French brother?”

The Carib pointed to the sun, and then to the eastern horizon ; and, shutting his eyes, let the smoke curl lazily out of his mouth and nostrils.

The interview was over, as François well knew : so he returned into the house.

CHAPTER II.

OH ! what joy on earth can equal that thrilling moment, when, after a separation, fraught with fearful dangers, the lover clasps his mistress to his heart ! Sorrow is forgotten ; the bitter pang of parting is remembered but as heightening their present bliss. The misery, the agony, they have endured, is but as a light cloud fleeting over the blue heaven : it has dropped its tears, and passed away, and is seen no more.

The deep grief that had settled on Rosalie's mind could not be easily removed, though it had been

turned aside by her lover's presence, and by his altered feelings—his conversion, as she called it. She had felt the shock more severely than Marguerite, simply because she had less faith and less moral courage to bear up against the pressure of misfortune; and now she was rather ashamed of her weakness, when she compared her conduct with her sister's, and wondered how one so gentle, one so soft and child-like, could have kept her self-possession in scenes and circumstances so awful.

Faith and innocence had sustained sweet Marguerite, like the fabled Una, amidst death and terror. And now, lest a reaction should take place, too grievous for her to bear, her mind was all-absorbed by Marinier's confession. Arthur, her devoted Arthur, was to hear a secret—a precious, precious secret—for which he would give worlds! What could it be? Was it about his mother—about Edith? No, no; she would not believe it had anything to do with Edith. It must be about the mother

he had so dearly loved, and so sadly lost. How happy it would make him—her own dear Arthur!

The three met again at dinner-time, when the surgeon joined them. Dallas had come from Rocroix to visit his patient, and declared him convalescent. François told him briefly the adventures of the two girls, and a messenger was sent off to Morne Bruce with a note, informing Arthur of their safety, and arrival at the Carse of Gowrie.

The kind-hearted surgeon was deeply interested in the whole party, particularly in the fate of our hero, and the sonsy, little Scotch lassie, as he called Marguerite. François repeated, as well as he could, what Marguerite had said about Marinier, and what the Carib Chief had hinted about the possibility of Arthur being shot by the negroes. In fact, he told him everything; for he felt and knew that he was talking to a friend.

Their conversation was long, and we must give a few extracts from it.

We must fancy the two lolling comfortably in easy chairs, in the cool verandah, enjoying the fresh trade-wind as it came wantoning over the white-capped waves, and gently sighing midst the waving tresses of the tapering palm-trees, and making the huge banana-leaves flap lazily. On a little table before the surgeon stood a huge glass goblet of some amber-coloured mixture, in which popped about a little green lime. He was puffing gently at a real genuine cigar from the Vuelta de Abajo, the fragrance of which is scarcely known in these degenerate days. François was leisurely sipping some delicious limade, stronger drink being for the time prohibited. They were very comfortable, if not luxurious, and we must really forgive them if they felt so. Still we don't envy them, although, to our sorrow, we confess we have passed many a pleasant hour in some such place and manner. And there is something enjoyable in it. There is a charm in the tropics, let the vomito break it never so rudely.

* * * * *

"I think, Mr. Dallas, you have often been at La Belle Etoile, have you not?" said François.

"Oh, yes; I attended Miss Gordon during a severe attack of fever."

"Pray, did you ever happen to hear what caused that sudden and seemingly unaccountable illness?"

"Yes; I found it out from Captain Conway. It was the effect of an anonymous letter."

"Written by a man called Marinier?"

"You know it, then?"

"Yes," said François, laughing; "I am in the secret. It was I who advised Rosalie Devrien to send for Captain Conway."

"And nearly killed him by it. I thought at one time he would have lost his life, or his wits."

"I also wrote him a note, warning him of the danger of leaving La Belle Etoile exposed to the negroes. Did he never get it?"

"Yes, he did get it, but only on the morning of the twenty-seventh, and even then it was found by chance on the body of a very old negro man."

“O, mon Dieu ! how could that have happened ? It is nearly three months since I gave it to old Pierrot.”

“I am aware of that, for I read it to Captain Conway myself.”

“Treachery—some cursed treachery, which I don’t understand ! Can Marinier have been at the bottom of this too ?” muttered François.

“The men had marched, and our force was but small ; but eight men were despatched to act as a garrison to the plantation. The Carib Chief would not go.”

“Ay ; he would not leave his intended victim till he had killed him. What became of Captain Diver ?”

“What ! you know him, too ?”

“Oh, yes ; I dined with him at La Belle Etoile, and we rode into Roseau together afterwards. He was to have joined the picnic, but he never came.”

“And what were you doing here ?”

“Come, come, Mr. Dallas, do not cross-question me too deeply, or I shall not be able to speak in confidence to you ; but, after all, it is

not about myself, but about Captain Conway, that I want your advice. I am deeply indebted to him on many accounts, for it is to him that I owe the preservation of one dearer to me than life. The Carib Chief was grateful to him—I doubt if he would have done the same for me. But you have not told me what became of Captain Diver.”

Dallas now briefly related the scene in Arthur’s room on the morning of the march. How the sailor was frightened by the appearance of Le Baron, and how he subsequently suddenly disappeared on the march, but how he died, or what became of him, he did not know.

“But how came he to be suspected?”

“Oh! he was found in a room with two notorious conspirators, Le Bar and Petun. They were hanged, but, as it was only suspicion against him, he was detained as a sort of hospital prisoner.”

“Well, there’s an end of them. And what became of the eight men?”

Dallas looked gloomy.

“By Jove! it never struck me! They

never could have got to La Belle Etoile. The cursed negroes must have murdered them. Poor Ellam!—it will be a great blow to Captain Conway, if he is killed.”

“It is very strange what a yearning I have in my heart towards this young Englishman. We have certainly been strangely brought together; but it is not that—it is a deeper, a stronger feeling, akin to love.”

“I should not wonder at all,” said Dallas, with a smile, “if it were so; for, I can assure you, the feeling is reciprocal.”

“Do not joke with me upon this subject, I pray you. Believe me, I am sincere in what I say.”

“Well, it’s not likely to be a joke with him. Why, when you were lying in the bed senseless, he kissed your forehead—very few Englishmen would do that without a good reason, or close relationship—and begged me, by all that was sacred, to take care of you, for you were his brother.”

“*Sacristie*! What! do you mean to say, that he actually called me his brother? How

can that be? It was a mere *façon de parler*."

"Not at all, if you will listen to me. My own conviction for the moment was, that he was a little bit cracked upon certain points; but, from what you have said about this Marinier having a terrible, or, at all events, a carefully-kept secret to tell him; and from his manner, after seeing something that was hanging round your neck, and comparing it with something of his own—"

"What!" interrupted François, eagerly, "did he see the locket with the miniature? Ah! I remember now: I am very like the man."

"And, by heavens! you are very like him, though you are dark, and he is fair. There is the same smile, the same cast of feature; nay, when you speak, I could almost fancy I heard him."

"Tom Connolly said you were a conjuror, Mr. Dallas."

"Don't call me 'Mr.' any more; call me 'Dallas.'"

"Well, Dallas, do you know, that I have

often thought, or dreamed, or fancied, or what you like, that Conway was in some way related to me by blood. I am an orphan, a foundling; nay, I do not even know my father's name—his surname, I mean—but I suppose it to be De la Motte, for that was the name on my clothes when I was found."

"No, that can scarcely be."

"What can scarcely be? Surely you do not doubt what I say?"

"No, no," said Dallas, laughing; "you catch one up so quickly. Will you let me look at the miniature that seemed to have such an effect upon Arthur?"

"Certainly."

"And I may examine it closely, and you won't be angry at any remarks I may make? You Frenchmen are so hot."

"And you English so cold," replied François, gaily.

"It is a good quality in this climate, and I mean to turn it to some account."

François took the miniature, set in the gold locket, from round his neck, saying: "I be-

lieve this is nearly the first time I have ever let it out of my hands since I was quite a child."

Dallas looked at it attentively for some minutes, and then he gazed, long and earnestly, at François. Presently his glances passed rapidly from face to face. He closed the locket, and said, slowly and deliberately :

"That is the portrait of your father ; of that there can be no doubt. I am no mean physiognomist, my young friend, and I pronounce it to be so with confidence. There is even more likeness than is generally found between father and son."

"This is not new to me," said François : "I always supposed this to be the portrait of my father."

"Ah, you think me no conjuror now ; but I can tell you that I have seen this face often."

"What ! have you seen my father ?" cried the young Frenchman, in astonishment. "Good God ! is he alive ? Shall I find him, after many years ?"

"Too hot—too hot. I did not say I had seen your father. Of that I give you no

hope at all; but I think I can find you a brother."

"Still you say you have seen this face?"

"And I repeat that I have; and, what is more, you shall see it; but, I warn you, that the sight will not be a pleasing one, and indeed I fear it will awaken bad thoughts in such a temperament as yours. You must give me a promise that you will keep your feelings under control."

"Marinier has something to do with this?" said François, eagerly.

"I should think he had, though at present it can only be guess work; but he must be forthcoming when wanted. Do you know where he is?"

"Yes, Le Baron has him safe."

"Who did you say?"

"The Carib Chief, Captain Conway's friend."

"This fellow seems to be at the bottom of everything. I shouldn't wonder if he may be turned to good account again."

"No doubt he will, if Marinier has any hand in it."

"How so?"

"I think he knows where Marinier has been hid for this last three months: perhaps we may be able to get hold of some information if we search the house. I think Captain Conway would be justified in seizing and opening any boxes or letters belonging to this Marinier."

"Yes, but we must go cunningly to work about it."

"And you think it can be done?"

"Certainly; but you must secure the co-operation of this ubiquitous savage."

"Can you put the trade-wind in a box? can you catch the sunbeams? can you work an impossibility? if so, you may make sure of the Carib. If you want him to speak he wont: threats, coaxings, tortures would be all in vain. If he does it at all, it will be of his own free-will."

"Well, you can but try."

"I am in a very awkward position, you must know, my dear Dallas. Can I confide entirely on your friendship?"

"Bah! I know, or can guess, everything you have got to say. You were here about

three months ago plotting, or making love secretly—it's all the same: then you came over to fight fair, and make love openly if you won. Well, you got off better than the other conspirators—they were hung and you escaped—now you got licked, and are a prisoner. Why, don't you see, nothing could have turned out better—*vogue la galère*."

François shifted about in his chair uneasily.

"Yes, that's all true enough; but suppose I am recognised—won't they hang me, too, as a spy?"

"Who's to know you? Le Bar and Petun are hanged: old Pierrot, who, I presume, had something to do with it, is dead. The Carib has killed your worst enemy, Lemantin: his gang is broken up. The Chief will be silent, and your new brother, Captain Conway, is not, I think, likely to throw you over. So, you see, I am the only one who can betray you, and I give you my honour I won't."

"Ah! you have forgotten the one enemy—Marinier."

"We will keep him in the background till

you are out of this, and have got your wings clipped. Depend upon it, Miss Rosalie will tame you a bit."

"*Diantre !*" said François, rather pleased than offended at this allusion, "I believe the Irishman is right, after all, when he called you a conjuror."

"Yes, we doctors know a thing or two, and sometimes we patch up wounded hearts as we do mutilated bodies, by uniting the parts whilst still warm; believe me, they come together readily enough with proper treatment. Come, my friend, think of it."

"What—what do you mean?"

"What do I mean!" said Dallas, lighting a fresh cigar. "Why, marry Rosalie—I mean Miss Devrien,—I have got so familiar with them, that I pray you excuse me—as soon as she will relent towards you. Don't you see you will then become a Legitimist, and you can act with greater freedom?"

"You forget, Dallas, that she has but just lost a father, whom she dearly loved."

"More reason," said the surgeon, finishing

his goblet of sangoree, "that she should have a husband to protect her. Besides, set the example, and Conway will follow it. Unfeeling as I am, I should rejoice to see him married to La Belle Ecossaise—it would be the saving of him. My beloved Shakespeare says : ' If it were done when 'tis done, then 'tis better if it were done quickly,'—rather mysterious, but to the purpose. Tom—Tom Connolly ! get me another goblet of this delicious nectar—I mean sangoree."

Tom obeyed, but the conversation nevertheless slackened. François began to think that the best thing he could do was to marry Rosalie, if she would consent off-hand. The reverie was a delicious one. He recalled to his imagination her innumerable charms, her confiding love, and he soon persuaded himself that he was not acting selfishly, but for her good, and for the benefit of all concerned.

Dallas perceived that his words had taken effect, and he wisely left the seeds he had sown to spring up and ripen. The soil he had planted them in he felt was tropical, and they would

have rapid growth and maturity. Nothing of moment could be done but this, before Conway was called on the stage to play his part. Then the drama would be highly interesting. Dallas felt it so, but he little imagined how remote was the dropping of the curtain.

* * * * *

They met at dinner. Reader, you must not judge of this party by a home standard. Events were too hurried, too terrible, too sad for us who sit quietly round our snug table, enjoying our Christmas fare and our happy little society, even to imagine the position of Marguerite and her guests. Alas! in those days, ay, even in later days, such trials as these glorious maidens had passed through were but every-day events, at certain times in the history of our West Indian possessions.

* * * * *

Pass we this evening spent in mingled joy and sorrow.

Dallas returned to Rocroix to look after his patients.

François retired to bed, to dream of Rosalie.

The two sisters to weep and pray together, in the hope of brighter days.

* * * * *

The sun had not yet dispersed the grey morning mists that hung in fantastic drapery over the gently heaving sea. The trade-wind, as if lulled to rest by the darkness, sighed no longer through the plantain-trees. The heavy night-dew stood in pearl-like drops on the leaves, and bent down the slender grasses. A dark form is stretched under a wide-spreading cotton-tree, his head pillowed on his arm, a bow is lying by his side.

Another dusky figure comes gliding swiftly and noiselessly amidst the trees and shrubs. You cannot hear his tread as he moves along.

But the sleeper has heard it; his hand is gently stretched out, and the bow is in it in a moment. Still he does not rise.

The new comer stops, and looks anxiously around.

The shrill twee-twee of the purple lizard, thrice repeated, is heard through the still air.

The upright figure listens attentively, putting his hand behind his ear, then he moves on to-

wards the cotton-tree. When he gets there, the recumbent figure is on its feet.

A few hurried words are passed in a low, soft, musical language.

The sleeper sinks again upon the dewy grass.

The other retreats as he had come, swiftly and silently, and disappears amidst the grey of the early dawn.

Presently, over the sea, towards the east, there rises slowly, and almost imperceptibly, an arch of pale, amber-coloured light, gradually at first, but rapidly increasing in its span. The drapery of mist rises and rolls towards the land. In a few minutes, a long, pointed streak of golden light streams up from the eastern horizon, then one on each side of it darts to the north and south. The mist rolls further inland. A moment! then along the deep blue sea, even to the narrow stripe of snow-white sand, is poured a flood of golden rays. A mass of unparalleled brilliancy succeeds, too dazzling for the eye to look upon. The mists gather on the mountain sides, and fill the valleys. The sun has risen!

The sleep of the young Frenchman had been broken and restless. The past, the present, and the future wanted wildly round his couch; and now when he awoke, instead of the beautiful angel of the day before, he beheld a wild-looking, half-naked form standing by his bed.

"Is his brother awake? If so, let him listen," said the Captain Baron, in his melodious voice.

François rubbed his eyes, and looked anxiously at the Carib.

"Well, Chief, what news?"

"Bad!" briefly responded Le Baron.

"Good God!" cried the young Frenchman, starting up in his bed. "You do not mean to say that Captain Conway is killed? Poor—poor Marguerite, after what she has suffered!"

The Carib understood him.

"The hogs were driven into a corner; they must die; even the base negroes will fight then. A bullet struck the Carib's brother."

"You say that the negroes have killed him? O, mon Dieu—mon Dieu!—how terrible! I loved him, Carib—I loved him!"

"Yet," added the Chief, sententiously, "Le Blanc fought against his brother."

François became dreadfully agitated.

"Carib, you cannot understand what I feel. Fearfully hast thou revenged thyself on me, O, God ! for my contempt of Thy power. Hadst Thou stricken me in my rebellious pride, Thou hadst not humbled me ! But now—but now ! O, Arthur ! O, my brother !"

The Carib saw the workings of the spirit within him, though he could not comprehend its outpourings. He laid his hand gently on the young Frenchman's arm, and said, in a low voice :

"The Carib Chief loves both his brothers, too. Let his French brother not grieve. His English brother is not dead. If he dies, Marinier shall die !"

Small consolation that, thought François : his mind immediately relieved of a fearful load when he heard Arthur was not dead. He was full of hope, a very contrast to poor Arthur.

"Carib," he said, "look well to this Marinier.

He must not escape, even if his English brother lives."

"He has no wings—he cannot fly. His prison is a high rock."

"Keep him fast—keep him fast, if you would do us a real service, Le Baron. Spare his life, but watch him closely. He is our bitterest enemy, but he must not die." Then, as if an idea had suddenly struck him, he resumed the third person in addressing the Carib, and said: "Three moons have shone and waned since the canoe went over the northern waters. Does Le Baron know where this Marinier was hid?"

Le Baron gave a slight groan, and muttered some Spanish name.

"Will Le Baron guide his brother to the spot when the time comes?"

Another slight groan was the response.

It was a well-known signal to François that the conversation was at an end for the present, but he also knew that his object was attained. Le Baron took his hand, kissed it, and glided out of the room, and he was not seen for some time afterwards.

Early as it was, François arose, and this time dressed himself without any assistance.

Tom Connolly was despatched to Rocroix to request that Dallas would join them at the Carse of Gowrie to hear some news of importance.

The surgeon guessed that it related to our hero, and lost no time in presenting himself at the plantation.

The greeting between the two was most cordial, but the surgeon was dreadfully shocked when he heard that Arthur had been severely, if not dangerously, wounded by the negroes.

And now the question naturally arose whether Marguerite should be informed of this sad event. After a lengthened debate, it was agreed that it should be broken to her gently by Dallas. Poor little Marguerite! Her lot was to suffer!

It was done carefully and guardedly by the kind-hearted surgeon. He gave her hope. The wound might not be a dangerous one after all. He would go himself the next morning and attend on his friend, and send her tidings without delay.

Marguerite turned pale, and tears stood in her eyes when she heard the sad news, but she bowed her head, saying: "God's will be done!"

* * * * *

The next morning was dull and misty, and, even to windward, there was not a single break in the leaden-coloured sky. The sea appeared to heave laboriously, as if kept down by the sullen atmosphere. Not a sail, not even a sea-bird broke the monotony of its inky hue. A dark haze shut out the distant islands from the view, although the eye could still trace their position: yet inland the mountains appeared close at hand.

François and the surgeon were seated in the verandah, ready accoutred for the journey, each with a fragrant cup of chocolate before them. They were waiting for the horses.

"This is a terrible day for our poor friend!" said Dallas, "if the fever is on him. How oppressive and sultry it is, although the sun has not yet risen!"

François did not reply, but stepped out on to the lawn.

“Peste !” he muttered. “I wish we had the Chief here. He foretold the earthquake when there were no signs visible to me—but, *sacristie* ! I don’t like the looks of it. Here are signs and tokens that he could read easily enough, if he chose. I wish there was a barometer here. I say, Dallas !” he said, aloud, “come out and look at the sea.”

“Never mind the sea : finish your chocolate, there’s a good fellow, and let us be off.”

“I don’t think I shall go to-day,” replied François, gravely, from the outside.

“Why, what a changeable person you are. Last night you would go ; now you won’t. You’re a true Frenchman, after all.”

“Look at the sky, Dallas ; look at the sea. No trade-wind. The air like the blast of a furnace ; there is something brewing, either a hurricane, or another earthquake. Can I, should I, leave Rosalie and Marguerite ?”

“Blow high, blow low, earthquake or hurricane, I start for Roseau. You can follow, if you like.

'Tis the very sultriness of the day that makes me the more anxious to be with poor Conway."

"But, if we are caught by a hurricane in the mountain passes?"

"Well; I suppose we must lie down, and let it blow over us."

"Or if another earthquake?"

"As well there as here, or anywhere else; did the last give any warning? or if it did, was the warning of any use? No; I tell you, it is the best way, to take these things as they come, and trust to Providence, they are none of our makings; but fever and wounds may be cured and healed by such as we. And here comes Connolly with the horses. Will you ride with me to find a brother, or stay here to console Miss Rosalie?"

An old negro led one of the horses, and to him François addressed himself.

"What do you think of the weather, Pompey?"

"Dat not my name, please Massa," replied the old negro, with a grin, "me Van Tromp."

François repeated his question impatiently.

"Me no tink bout de wedder, Massa."

"Peste! are we going to have a hurricane?"

"No, Massa, not dis day."

"How do you know that?"

The old negro scratched his woolly poll:

"Cause de cattle and de pigs tell 'um."

"Are you making fun of me, you old scoundrel?" cried François, half laughing, half angry.

"Ole nigger slave, nebber laugh at buckra gentlemen. Van Tromp tell de trut."

"It's a pig's whisper, shure enough," muttered Connolly, grinning.

"What do you mean, then?"

"I ole man, Massa, see more blow dan one, no tinkee one come to-day, 'cause cattle no look about—go to water—all same as ebber; pigs yam, too, dig snouts in de troughs, den lie down and grunt; dey know better as we Christians when hurricane come."

Dallas had mounted, and so had Connolly, who, like most Irishmen, had a good seat, and was delighted at being on horseback.

François stood for a moment irresolute; then, as if acted upon by a sudden impulse, he, too,

jumped into his saddle, to the great dismay of Van Tromp, and tossing the old negro a dollar, with a gay laugh, he quickly joined the surgeon.

Old Van Tromp, without knowing it, had done a vast deal of good. More than a dollar's worth.

We will pass over their ride, which was performed as rapidly as the oppressive heat, and the still weak state of the young Frenchman, permitted.

As they entered the town, Dallas said that he would call upon Dr. Gray, and inquire about his patient, before he went up to the Morne. To this François made no objection, as he had previously met the Doctor at La Belle Étoile, and had liked him very much.

On passing Fort Charlotte, they saw a beautiful, rakish-looking brigantine, lying at single anchor under the guns of the fort, with her topsail loose, and a blue Peter flying; she did not carry a pendant, but was heavily armed for a vessel of her apparent tonnage; but like all trim-built craft, she was much larger than she seemed, and although she had a blue

ensign hoisted, she was evidently not British built.

What she had originally been is not known, but she had been captured after a long chase off the Havannahs, by one of our cruisers, and taken into Port Royal, where she had been condemned as a prize, and sold to some enterprising merchants, who had fitted her out as a privateer, and unlike the Government dock-yard people, they had remasted and fresh rigged her, exactly as she had been before, leaving her as rakish as of yore, only the 'Esmeralda' was changed into the 'Emerald.' As the riders passed the gate of the Fort, the sergeant of the guard was standing outside. It was our old friend Sergeant Owens. He saluted Dallas respectfully, and gave Tom a nod and a wink, as much as to say, "How came you on horseback, Master Tom?"

"How is Captain Conway, to-day?" inquired Dallas, anxiously, though he strove to hide it.

"Very bad, Sir, I'm told; he is rambling a good deal in his talk. Dr. Gray passed just now and spoke to me about it, for he knows,

God bless him ! that we are all very anxious about the Captain."

"I shall find Dr. Gray at home, then?"

"Yes, Sir, he is just gone there from seeing the Captain."

"What vessel's that, sergeant? where does she come from, do you know?"

"She has brought letters and despatches from Barbadoes, and, I think, from England, too, Sir. I heard a rumour that more troops, under a field-officer, were coming here directly. They are wanted much, Sir, our men are sadly overworked."

"Many in hospital, Owens?"

"Too many Sir. Yellow Jack has showed himself at last, and they are dying fast. There's Collings and Monaghan, and Price and Reid dead, Sir, within three days. Beg pardon, Sir, how are the wounded?"

"All convalescent, Owens. The climate is much better to windward."

"We haven't had a breath of air here these three days—never since we came back from killing the negroes."

"Did you kill many of them, Owens?"

"Nigh hand upon fifty, Sir; but not before

they had shot the two Raftarys and young Austen, who was lifting the Captain up, a fine young fellow he was—we did not spare many of them, Sir: our blood was up.”

“ So I should think—but what became of Ellam ?”

“ Oh, he is doing very well, Sir, only I fear he is too weak to wait so much on the Captain as he does; he won’t let others act as orderlies.”

“ Thank you, Sergeant Owens: that will do.”

“ Now, Devrien, are you inclined to face Dr. Gray ?”

“ Certainly, *mon cher*, he knows me only as Mademoiselle Rosalie’s cousin and devoted admirer.”

We need not introduce Doctor and Mrs. Gray to our readers as our characters are already over numerous, and they have no further part in this drama than that of becoming the hosts of François Devrien.

We will merely state that Dr. Gray had been an army-surgeon; but finding a pretty creole with some money, willing to marry him, he had left the service and settled at Roseau as a physician; and as such he had pretty good practice.

They were kind people, and when Dallas explained the position in which François Devrien stood, they offered him the use of their house which he cordially and gratefully accepted. Here they heard the news relating to the 'Emerald' confirmed. She had brought intelligence of reinforcements having arrived at Barbadoes from England, and that a regiment, or at all events a strong detachment, under a field-officer, might be daily expected; but whether to strengthen or to relieve the detachment already at Morne Bruce was not known. As soon as she had gone the round of the British Islands and landed her despatches, she was to beat up to Jamaica. And on her return to Barbadoes she was to collect mails, and afterwards, it was understood, sail direct for England.

The 'Emerald' was destined to have great influence on the future career of our hero; but we must not anticipate.

François remained under the hospitable roof of Dr. Gray, and Dallas proceeded to Morne Bruce.

And now we will bid them good-night.

CHAPTER III.

DARK, lurid clouds, lit up, here and there, with a yellow, sickly ray, rolled in vast masses along the horizon; a dull, leaden, hazy sky hung gloomily overhead; the atmosphere was oppressive, and difficult to breathe. The lizards basked lazily on the walls; and alone, by an occasional movement of their large, bright, round, prominent eyes, showed that they were alive. The huge plantain leaves hung motionless; the light, feathery bamboos did not so much as stir a single leaf. Not a bird was in the air; even the bright-plumaged, busy little humming-birds had retired to the shelter of the forests. The demon of pestilence was abroad.

Such was the morning, when François found himself, for the first time, on the Morne.

Dallas was waiting for him in the creeper-covered porch. "Hush!" said he; "speak low: he catches every sound."

"How is he to-day?"

"I think the fever seems abating, though he is talking loosely and incoherently. Come in as noiselessly as you can."

Arthur Conway was lying on his bed, covered with a single sheet.

He had been brought out into the sitting-room, and placed in the centre, so as to have as free a circulation of air as possible. His face was flushed, and although he lay perfectly still, his eyes, shining with feverish brilliancy, kept wandering restlessly in every direction, never resting for a single moment on one object.

By his side sat the faithful Tom Ellam, fanning him gently, and keeping off the musquitos with a bunch of lime-twigs.

Gently as the two men had entered the room, the patient heard them.

"Who is that?" he said, in a husky voice, though his eyes still wandered about.

"It is I—Dallas, my dear Conway. I have brought a kind friend to see you."

"A friend! I have no friends; they are all dead—dead—dead; gone to their death-bed, all under the willow-tree. Ah, me!—one—two—three—they drop off like the leaves, when the hurricane strips the trees;" and a deep sigh seemed to burst forth from the depths of his heart.

"Come here," said the surgeon, in a low voice, to François: "place yourself where he can see your face distinctly."

The young Frenchman did as he was desired; and, kneeling down by the bed, he took one of the pale, thin hands, that were lying listlessly on the coverlet, in his own: it was fearfully emaciated, and yet burning hot.

"Dear Conway," said Dallas, stooping over him, "this is your brother François: do you know him?"

The fevered eye of the patient rested for a single moment on the Frenchman's face; and a faint, a very faint smile, illumined his flushed face; yet in that smile, faint as it was, there was hope.

But suddenly he murmured, in a low, moaning voice: "Can the dead come to life again? Ha! ha!" and then a wild laugh rang through the room. "I have it—I have it; that's the man in the picture, but he is dead—and his hand grasps mine—it's icy cold—corpses have cold hands—is he come to take me to my mother?"

François was deeply affected, and tears rolled down his cheeks upon the hand of the patient.

"What's that?" almost screamed Conway. "Blood! blood! more blood! Why do they all die? He's all bloody, see. The man with the glittering eyes did it. There's a flash. The tree is on fire. How many corpses? all dead—all! Edith! and Marguerite! and Rosalie! and my mother! O, mother! mother! why did you die? No, no; she is on my breast. She is not dead. Look! look! it's not there. I can't see it, there's blood in my eyes, blood—ever blood!"

At that moment, the report of a cannon, not very far distant, shook the wooden building, making the jalousies rattle again.

“See what that is, Ellam,” said Dallas, in a low voice.

“Ha! there’s the French come back again. Now then, we have cut them off. Steady boys! Gently! Don’t throw a shot away. Down with the bloody gang. Don’t spare a man of them. They burnt her. Revenge! That negro is aiming at me—shoot him, Owens—ha, ha! Yet there’s one I love, spare him—don’t hurt a hair of his head. That’s him standing there—all blood—he’s my brother, I tell you. Where’s the Carib Chief? Too late—too late—too late! the rocks are falling down. Keep closer, Marguerite; don’t tremble so, you frighten me. Well leapt—down, a thousand feet down: I can’t see him, but the Carib can. They are all dead—dead—dead.” And his head, which had been partially raised, fell back on his pillow, and his voice sunk into a low moaning whisper.

Ellam came back. “It’s the ‘Emerald,’ Sir, fired the gun—the vessel that brought the despatches from Barbadoes. There’s a letter for my young master from Plymouth, came by

her. A little breeze has sprung up suddenly, and she's getting under weigh."

"Do you think, Ellam, that the Captain is ever enough himself to be conscious of what you say to him?"

"I think he does understand me at times, Sir."

"Well then; try and impress on his senses, that the young ladies, Miss Margaret and Miss Rosalie I mean, are quite safe and well; do you understand me?"

"Yes, I do," replied Ellam, joyfully. "If he could but be made to understand that, I think my young master would come round at once."

"I am going to bleed him; this fever must be abated, and should he recover his senses even for a moment, Ellam, watch him closely, and do as I have told you: it is quite true. I must go into the next room, by-and-by, for a short time, so I shall leave you to watch then, though I shall stay and see the effects of the bleeding. Then he turned to François, and said in a whisper: "Now, Devrien, your interview has

lasted long enough. You have given me more hope of him than I had. Go and sit in there till I come ;” and he pointed to the door of the bed-room.

François did as the surgeon requested, and without hesitation went into what had been formerly Arthur Conway’s bed-room, and shut the door.

In one corner, on a small rosewood stand, there stood something covered with a green silk curtain.

He always affirmed that something beyond mere curiosity, impelled him to draw the curtain on one side.

What he saw astonished and confounded him. Such an article of furniture as this in an English officer’s bed-room—and he a Protestant, to boot ! He admired the exquisite chasing of the figure on the cross, and he soon perceived that the picture told some strange history.

But the left hand pannel, which, it may be remembered, had called up a demoniacal smile on the countenance of the priest, attracted him most. His gaze became rivetted. He took a

chair and placed it opposite. He opened the jalousies to admit more light. Then he sat down before it. Minute after minute, hour after hour passed, and there he sat looking at the picture.

No one interrupted him.

He had beheld that scene before—but when? but how?

Dallas at length came in, and for a moment broke the spell.

“Well, *mon cher*,” said he, “have you made it out?”

“No,” said François, sadly pressing his forehead with his hand. “There is a cloud still here. Bright rays are striving to disperse the mist, but it will not roll off. There it rests, and, I fear, will rest for ever.”

“Look!” said Dallas, pointing to the bleeding figure. “That is your father. Compare it with the miniature round your neck, and you will see it in a moment.”

“I do, I do! and the weeping woman! She, too, who is supplicating the cardinal.”

“That is Arthur Conway’s mother—and yours, too. See, I have removed the locket.

from his neck—he has fallen asleep: that is what I waited for. Look at it. The features, the hair are the same—and her name was Eugenie de la Motte.”

“ And the man carrying off the child.”

“ You must ask Marinier who the man is; but the child is yourself.”

“ Eureka! eureka!” cried the young French man, in ecstasy, “I have it now all clear as the broad daylight before me. I see it in my mind’s vision visibly, distinctly. Oh, what a flash of memory darts through my brain and dances before my eyes. Oh, Dallas! how shall I thank you? Raymond to Eugenie! Eugenie de la Motte! and the wood, and the grey horse, and the man with the glittering eyes—the bleeding corpse and the shrieking woman. Ha! her cry rings in my ears: My boy, my boy! How the horse galloped—how tightly the man held me—how I screamed. Then there was a horrid crash—my head was struck and my eyes flashed fire. By heavens! here is the scar on my forehead still; and I could remember nothing of all this for twenty years and more—twenty years!”

Then his voice changed to a fierce revengeful tone, and his eyes flashed fire.

“Who is the assassin? who killed my father? See you, Dallas, this can have been no fair fight. It must have been murder—cruel, cowardly murder.”

“Calm yourself, and listen to me,” said the surgeon, gravely. “What has made you forget all this for so long a time, has simply been the effect of the blow on your head, and this still incapacitates you in a certain degree—forgive me if I speak freely—from reasoning clearly and dispassionately, or I think it is probable you would never have become a bitter Republican.”

“Don’t preach me a sermon, there’s a good fellow—I have seen my folly and do not mean to repeat it.”

“You have had a bitter lesson—I trust you will improve by it, and now I think I can put you on the right track. It is evident to me, from certain signs and circumstances, that the man who killed your father—”

“Say rather who murdered him.”

“Well, murdered him if you please—is identical with him who is at the bottom of this foul

conspiracy against the life and happiness of your half-brother, Arthur Conway. Is it not just possible that your mother may have slighted or rejected this man—this wily, treacherous, and dangerous villain? That he has power and means at his command is evident, for he has been already enabled to work much mischief through his agent Marinier, though thwarted by the mysterious hand of Providence, particularly by calling up this Carib as a protector and preserver, when all seemed hopelessly lost. Depend upon it, Marinier can throw a light upon the whole subject if he chooses; yet I would be wary with him, for I do not think he is to be trusted. You must see him, and alone. It is the same hand that slew your father that has used him as a tool to destroy Arthur. See to it, my friend: I will do all I can for you. Guard your temper, and marry Rosalie—make certain of her before you take any further steps. You will then be a free agent, and, if you like it, you may become a British subject.”

“I never heard of a married man being called a free agent before,” said François, laugh-

ing, "and as to becoming a British subject, that would be an act of treachery—but I will have nothing more to do with France whilst she is stained with her own blood. In the meantime, how am I to act?"

"No doubt the Carib will be here soon," replied Dallas, "to see how his friend, the English Captain, is getting on, and I will send him down to you with a small party of soldiers under a man I can trust, that serjeant we saw yesterday. And now I shall dismiss you for the present, for I have much to attend to. Reflect on what I have said, and be cautious."

"I would rather stay here," replied François, "and attend on poor Arthur."

"No, that must not be—you are too weak yourself; and, moreover, I fear a sudden shock for him. Go, and as soon as you have searched Marinier's dwelling, comfort Miss Rosalie; I will take care of Arthur—go, there's a good fellow."

François could not refuse, particularly as Dallas rose and gently opened the door into Conway's room. The young Frenchman cast

one lingering look on the ornamented crucifix, and followed the surgeon on tip-toe. Arthur was fast asleep. His eyelids had at length closed, and there was good hope now for him, should he awake without delirium.

Dallas squeezed the hand of the young Frenchman without speaking, and François felt it was a signal for him to depart ; so, returning the pressure of the kind surgeon's hand, he went out into the porch ; and what was his surprise to see a half-naked, dusky figure, stretched under the shade of the matted creepers, smoking, quietly, with his eyes half-closed ; but the moment François appeared, he sprang, at once, on his feet. It was Le Baron.

“ Brother in there no dead—eh ? ” said the Carib, in a low voice, pointing to Arthur's quarters.

“ No, thank God,” replied François. “ Let the Chief's heart be glad ; his English brother is asleep, and there is hope.”

“ Good ! ” articulated the Carib, slowly. “ Then Marinier not die.”

“What of him, Le Baron? Is the enemy safe?”

Le Baron groaned assent.

“Does Le Baron remember his promise, to show his French brother Marinier’s house?”

The Chief groaned again.

“Is Le Baron ready to go now?”

Another groan.

“Wait, then, Le Baron, till I get a party of soldiers to go with us,” and he was turning back to see Dallas.

“No want red soldiers; one plenty. Beastly negroes run away when Le Baron come. Plenty Carib, when he cry like a hawk: no cry, dey not seen. French brother come—eh?”

“Is it far, Le Baron?”

“Bout one hour,” replied the Carib.

Tom Connolly was leading François’ horse up and down on the savannah, under the mango-trees, in front of Arthur’s quarters; and the young Frenchman went over to him, beckoning the Carib to follow. Tom said that he had orders to act as orderly to his honour, as long as he remained on that side of the island; “and

that, in coorse, he was ready to go anywhere his honour pleased, without asking any one's leave, at all, at all; and he could get the Captain's other horse for himself."

François, glad to get hold of the Captain Baron so easily, was anxious to be gone, so there was very little delay; and the strangely-assorted trio set out for the middle ground, the proper name for which was La Vuelta di Abajo. While Tom Connolly had gone for the horse, the Carib had suddenly disappeared; but in a few minutes he returned, and now he was in his full war-dress, with his shark-skin quiver of arrows at his back, and his hard-wood bow in his hand.

Little was said on the road, until they came to a spot where they had to turn off from what was dignified by the name of a road. Then the Carib notified to François that he must dismount, and give Connolly the horses to hold; then, with a flashing eye, he pointed to some rocks, that served as the opposite portal to the high cliff, and said: "See dere; beastly negroes kill two Caribs—shoot them from de

rocks. Caribs spit on de negroes ; kill twenty for two. Dat good—eh, brother ?”

François did as the Carib desired, and followed the Chief, as he led the way up the winding track, spoken of in a preceding chapter. But this time there were no guinea-fowls scampering through the grass ; not a living thing was to be seen. Weeds had already begun to spring up in every direction, defacing the once well-kept provision ground with their nauseous presence. In a few months it would be a wilderness, so rapid is the growth of plants in this warm and rainy island.

The Carib, with his usual precaution, whispered to François to remain concealed in the bush till he saw there was no danger to be apprehended. He crawled up to the house, twisting and twining like a snake amidst the grass and rank growth of weeds, and listened intently ; there was no sound but the chirping of a cricket, and the hum of mosquitos. He peered in at the door, which stood ajar ; there was not a soul inside.

What had become of its inmates we know

not ; probably after the death of the old man, and the defeat of the negroes, they had fled into the bush, fearing to be implicated in the rising against the white men : but of this we have no certain knowledge.

The house was carefully searched by the young Frenchman, who discovered nothing ; but the keen eyes of the savage detected, amidst a heap of withered leaves, blown in through the open door, a single small scrap of paper.

He handed it to François. It was evidently the corner of a letter, torn off accidentally.

François took it eagerly, and, to his great joy, found the writing was not washed out or obliterated. A curious expression lighted up his features, when he had deciphered the writing on this scrap of paper. Few as the words were, they gave him a clue to his own history.

“No longer the Abbé Latouche, but once more the gay Marquis de Charolles. On second thoughts, I shall drop the Marquis, and call myself plain Mister, as these islanders have it. How will it sound, Mr. and Mrs. Charolles ?”

“This must be Marinier’s correspondent,

Arthur's persecutor, his father's murderer ; and his name is the Marquis de Charolles, and he is alive and in England."

How he longed now for an interview with Marinier, to learn if his suspicions were correct. He folded up this scrap of paper as carefully as if it had been a note for thousands, and placed it near his heart : then his eye sought the Carib Chief, but to his surprise he had disappeared.

He was greatly annoyed at this, and ran down the steep descent to where he had left Connolly with the horses.

"Have you seen anything of the Carib, Tom?" said François, out of breath.

"No, your honour, the savage has not shown himself; but I heard that queer hawk scream just now."

"Oh, he has been called away by some of his own people: but no matter, my errand is accomplished."

* * * * *

François did not remain long at Roseau. Dallas declared that Arthur was not in imminent danger, and persuaded François to return

to the Carse of Gowrie, to cherish and protect those he had left there.

We need not relate what arguments he used to overcome Rosalie's maiden scruples, but he succeeded, and no wonder, for the helplessness of the position of both these fair young girls was truly singular. They had no relatives—scarcely any friends. The times were uncertain and threatening ; they had suffered already fearfully, and they wanted a protector. There was a chapel at Rocroix, and there these two became one, by the holy rite of marriage, performed by a French priest, who had taken refuge from the terrors of *sans culotteism*.

* * * *

A few days after the wedding, François received a visit from the Carib Chief, who, without explaining why he had left him at the deserted hut, said that the surgeon had sent him to say that his English brother was well ; and, just before he took leave, he said :

“ If his French brother wishes now to see Marinier, Le Baron will take him to the rock. The piragua will come to the orange-grove in

two days, two times," meaning two days running. "Brother, sabe where dat is?"

François replied in the affirmative, and said :

"In two days the Carib's brother will be there, when the sun passes towards the west."

CHAPTER IV.

LE BARON was true to his appointment, and when François arrived at the spot indicated, he found him seated on a rock, smoking his never-failing pipe, with the canoe lying at his feet. Without saying a word, he arose, and carried the piragua down to the sea, and, assisting the young Frenchman to creep in, he pushed it off, and stepped in himself, with so nice a balance, that it scarcely dipped on one side. Then he paddled away swiftly to the southward, keeping close to the shore, but skirting the bays and inlets. They passed the Souffrière, and rounded Scot's Head. François could not help admiring the beauty and sublimity of the scenery. Here

a mountain spur ended in a sheer and giddy precipice, with twenty fathoms of deep blue water at its base ; another, more rounded, sloped gradually away to a narrow fringe of sand or shingle, covered with fantastic shrubs and waving ferns. Again, another would pierce the ocean with a sharp point of irregular rocks, and behind this would tower a mountain clothed to the summit with brilliant and variegated foliage.

At length they came to a small but deep bay, with a narrow beach of snow-white sand, backed by a semicircle of frowning, inaccessible cliffs ; at the southern horn of the bay there rose a lofty and singular rock. At a little distance, it appeared an abrupt promontory, but, on nearing it, you found that it was perfectly isolated. Detached from the main island by one of those awful throes and heavings of the earth so frequent in the Antilles, it stood a sublime record of the Almighty's power.

Overhead a few creepers had thrown out feelers from the island, as if nature was endeavouring to re-unite it, even by a slender tie, to

its parent earth. But below a narrow channel of deep water divided it entirely from the main land.

"Plenty Carib up there," said Le Baron, speaking for the first time. "Brother want to see Carib town?" and he pointed to the top of an apparently inaccessible cliff.

"Not now, Le Baron—not now. His brother wishes to see Marinier.

"French brother plenty welcome. Caribs all good—negroes all bad," and he spat into the water. "Bad as shark fish—plenty down there. Brother, take care no slip into the sea—that bad; Le Baron tell Marinier so. Shark fish good as red soldiers to watch Carib's Cliff."

This, then, was the notorious Carib's Cliff. François felt a slight shudder pass over his frame. The Chief then ran the canoe up a little creek between two rocks at the foot of the inlet, and François stepped out carefully on the slippery surface.

The Carib pointed to a sort of zigzag path cut in the rock, and said:

"Marinier, up there."

“But, how is his brother to get away again?” asked François, eyeing the steep ascent.

“The Carib’s brother knows the hawk’s cry, when it is heard, the piragua will come for him,” and he paddled away; and running his canoe high on the sandy beach was lost to sight in a moment.

Left alone on this singular islet, rent as it were from the neighbouring cliff, the young Frenchman mechanically felt that his pistols were safe, and then with a beating heart he began to climb the steep and slippery winding stair. Once or twice he had to grasp the rocks on either side to save himself from falling, and as he stopped to rest against an overhanging ledge, he looked down into the clear blue water and turned away shuddering, for there in the crystalline depths he could discern the dim grey outlines of several huge tigers of the deep, cruising slowly about, or hovering in mid water like birds of prey in the air.

About half-way up the rock, the stair seemed to end in a small platform of dazzling snow-white sand, on which were the prints of footsteps.

The mouth of a low browed cave stood yawning opposite to him.

“Who is there?” said a voice that sounded harsh and loud, as it reverberated against the sides of the winding cavern.

“It is I, Le Blanc, don’t you know my voice, *mon cher*?”

“Yes, I know it; what do you want here?” rumbled from the depths of the cave.

Not a hearty welcome this, thought François; but never mind, *le pauvre diable* is a prisoner. “I have come to pay you a visit, Marinier, and I want to have a chat with you—where are you?”

“Here;” but the echoes puzzled him.

François, unused to this semi-darkness, went stumbling forwards over the points of the stalactites that rose from the bed, occasionally knocking his head against the roof, but taking it all in the most perfect good-humour until he found himself suddenly treading on soft sand, and a gleam of light penetrating the roof showed him a figure lying at full length on a sheep-skin, spread on the ground.

“ Ah, I’ve found you at last ; what a devil of a place !”

Yet was the cave, when lighted up, a fairy palace of dazzling colours.

Marinier turned his face towards him—it was fearfully haggard ; his eyes were bloodshot, and his beard unshorn, for nearly a fortnight, gave to his pale face a fierce and unearthly expression.

He addressed the young Frenchman abruptly:

“ Do you come as an envoy from Captain Conway ?”

“ No, *mon cher*, I have come on my own account.”

“ On your own account—how so ? Is it to revenge yourself on me ? You see I am unarmed—my life is in your hands—take it. I wish for nothing better. I cannot take it myself, I am too great a coward. Bah, one plunge into the deep sea and all were over ; but those cursed grinning sharks—I cannot do it.”

“ Don’t fret yourself, *mon cher*, I do not want revenge. I have merely come to ask you some questions, and much I may say

depends upon your answering them freely and truly."

"And what harm will befall me if I should refuse to do so, or what good shall I get by answering them?"

"I can procure not only your release from this prison, but safety for your person, if you will comply with my demands, and your answers satisfy me."

"The temptation is a great one certainly; but I doubt your power."

"I will prove it to you by-and-by, and to show you that I already know something, I will cap you with a name. Tell me, are you acquainted with an individual who calls himself the Marquis de Charolles?"

Marinier replied bitterly, but without the least hesitation :

"Do I know him? of course I do, or I should not be rotting here miserably like a worn-out wild beast, in a cave."

"Do you no longer care for him, then?"

"I care more for life and liberty; but you must prove to me that you have the will and

the power to rescue me from this degrading captivity, Monsieur le Blanc, or whatever your name is."

"That's exactly what I want to know."

"You must remember, that we rowed in the same boat. I have learnt to be suspicious, and—, but no matter.

"I know what you would say, Marinier; but that is all past and gone. I am a prisoner on parole, and have married Mademoiselle Rosalie Devrien. So you see; I am in the road to become a Legitimist altogether, seeing that my best half is so already. Bah! that old conspiracy stinks in my nostrils. How could a man of your education and talent, herd with such beasts as Lemantin and his filthy gang?"

"I played my game, and lost it. It is all over now, and I only wish to be free."

"No more plotting, then, eh? no more schemes against the young Englishman?"

"No; on my honour. I only wish for an interview with him, to tell him a secret."

"Can't you confide it to me; I'm safe?"

"No; it would lose its effect."

"And if I help you to an interview with him, which I will do; will you answer me what I want to know?"

"Ask your questions."

"Let me light a cigar first. Do you smoke? Ah! take one, then, it will comfort you," and François coolly proceeded to strike a light. This done, he lay down on the soft sand, and while Marinier was kindling his, he thought, now for it; let us see what we can draw out of him—*diantre*! he seems ready enough.

"All right, Marinier."

The *soi-disant* Jesuit nodded assent.

"Was the Marquis de Charolles ever at Frejus, in Provence?"

A shade of suspicion passed across Marinier's features, as he said:

"Do these questions relate to Captain Conway?"

"*Parole d'honneur*, no; they are for my own use and benefit."

"Say on, then," replied Mariner, apparently satisfied.

"You have not yet answered my first interrogatory."

"Let me think. Yes; I have heard the Marquis say that he had been there once."

"And what was he doing in such an out-of-the-way place?"

"I think he went to fight a duel."

"And killed his adversary?"

"I believe so."

"Thank you, Marinier; you have relieved my mind from a great burthen."

"How can that possibly be?"

"I thought," said the young Frenchman in a drawling tone, letting the smoke curl gently out of his mouth, "that this man, this Marquis de Charolles, had murdered my father—that's all."

Marinier saw that he had been entrapped; yet, what mattered it to him now? freedom was his all in all—that must be gained at any price, or his new game could not be played out. No evidence at this distance of time could possibly be found to prove the Marquis a murderer, though, that he was one to the full extent of the word, he well knew, as the reader has already heard.

"Murdered your father! What do you mean, young man? I do not understand you!"

"Or killed him in a duel. Well, it does not much matter which. I don't remember my father; what was he like? who was he? was he noble? Ha, ha! Now I have married a Legitimist, I should like to find myself one of the *ancienne noblesse*. Come, tell me, *mon cher*."

"How can I tell you, if I do not know?" replied Marinier, with an impatient shrug.

"But you do, and must, know, Marinier, for you are well acquainted with this *soi-disant* Marquis de Charolles, and he killed him. What the devil did he carry me off from my mother for? can you tell me that? Was it to adopt me?"

"You are speaking in riddles. I know nothing of you or your mother. I only know that the Marquis went into Provence to seek out one who had deeply injured him."

"But I do," replied François, almost in a whisper. "Her name was Eugenie de la Motte."

“What?” almost screamed Marinier, “what did you say?”

“Eugenie de la Motte,” repeated François, calmly.

“Who, in the devil’s name, has told you all this? Was it Captain Conway?”

“No, no; he can scarcely even speak, as yet. I learned it all by a singular accident. I wish you would be more open with me, *mon cher*.”

But Marinier was silent. This had struck him like a thunderbolt—suddenly and unexpectedly. He paused to reflect. This, then, was the other son of her whom his employer hated with such a rancorous hate, that, not content with her death and dishonoured memory, he had used every means in his power to destroy body and soul, to blast the happiness and injure the fame of her child. Oh, how he cursed the Carib in the depths of his heart; but for him, and him only, not only the one son, but both, would have suffered the deepest injury that man can suffer—a wound that would have rankled, festered, for years and years; per-

haps never to heal again. And here was one of them, free and happy, and married to the maiden of his choice ; who, but for the Carib, would long ere this have been the leman of a savage mulatto. And this man, ardent, frank, active, and intelligent, was in possession of part of his secret. How could he have obtained the knowledge? Who could have betrayed him? Little did Marinier think that it was only conjecture on the part of the young Frenchman that the Marquis de Charolles was the man who stabbed his father. Dallas and François had settled it between them, as we have seen, that Marinier's employer was the man in the picture, and the scrap of paper found at the Middle Ground had betrayed his name, or rather names.

“ ‘No longer the Abbé Latouche, but once more the gay Marquis de Charolles. On second thought, I shall drop the Marquis, and call myself plain Mister, as these islanders have it. How will it sound—Mr. and Mrs. Charolles?’ ”

Marinier was the first to break the silence. Until this moment, he had not the slightest

inkling of this young Frenchman being the son of De Charolles' victim; he had made up his mind to tell François what he knew about this transaction, of course, with certain reservations, but he did not do so at once, for he said :

“ Did I hear you aright? Captain Conway cannot even speak? What has happened to him? I am afraid you are deceiving me, Monsieur Le Blanc.”

“ I have told you the simple truth, Marinier. He has been badly wounded, poor fellow ! fever supervened ; but he is getting better fast, although still so weak that he is not allowed to speak to any one.”

“ How, then, am I to have an interview with him ?”

“ You must wait a few days, Marinier—here, if you like it, in this quiet, retired spot—or you may come and take up your quarters in the gaol at Roseau.”

“ By all the powers of hell ! it would drive me mad to live in this wretched dungeon much longer, watched by a set of cursed savages !” said Marinier, fiercely.

“ Courage, mon ami ; c’est la fortune de la guerre.”

“ Ah !” replied the prisoner, passionately, “ you know not what hinges on this. He will be too late. Much good time has been already lost by this fatal imprisonment.”

“ If you mean Captain Conway, I tell you he cannot leave his bed for three or four days to come, if it were to save his soul from perdition.” Then he added, with a laugh, that grated harshly on Marinier’s ears : “ When he is well and strong enough, he will no doubt follow my example, and marry Miss Gordon. She is in want of a protector. Do you not think so, *mon cher* ?”

“ Malediction !” muttered Marinier, “ if I can’t get free, I shall be utterly powerless, I see,” and he pressed his hand to his burning eyes.

“ What’s the matter with you, Marinier ?”

“ You said, Monsieur, that you had the power to release me from this atrocious captivity. I put myself in your hands afterwards ; only let me out of this. It is too degrading ; a prisoner to such beastly savages.”

“Tush! tush! There are few of the old noblesse to be compared to this Captain Baron.”

“Pshaw! you are mocking me. Come, say that I may be free, and I will tell you all.”

“One thing is certain,” replied François, quietly, “that unless you do, there is very little chance of your ever leaving this pretty cavé. Should Captain Conway die—and you know that this climate is somewhat deadly—I don’t think anybody will seek you here, but your humble servant.”

“Peste! you have me in your hands,” said Marinier, savagely, whilst at the same time a slight mocking smile played round his thin lips, unseen by François. “I might as well tell you all I know.”

“Say on, I am all attention.”

“When the Marquis de Charolles was a gay young man about Court, he fell desperately in love with a Mademoiselle de la Motte. Her father was a great friend of the Marquis, and agreed to a contract of marriage between them; whether the contract was ever signed, I do not know; but about the time that the marriage

was generally supposed to have been fixed, for the young lady suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. The Marquis was furious, and had a stormy interview with her father, who, by way of pacifying, showed him a letter which his daughter had left. This only increased his fury, for it vilified and traduced him. He sought her everywhere, in England, in Germany, in Switzerland, in Italy, but for nearly four years he could hear no tidings of her, so well had her flight been concealed. I know now how that was managed. But one day, he happened to be at Marseilles, and there he heard, I know not how, that a lady, with bright golden hair, was living with her husband, in a small château, near Frejus. He rode out, unaccompanied, on a powerful grey horse, and in a glade of a forest, he saw her he loved, walking with a man, whose arm was twined round her waist, whilst a boy, about four years old, was running and playing about them. The Marquis told me that his brain reeled at the sight, and that he nearly fell from his horse. When he recovered, he rode up to the party

and threw himself off his horse, which had been trained to stand perfectly still. The cavalier heard him, and removing his arm from the lady's waist, confronted him. The Marquis drew his sword; he said that he could not speak, but he struck the cavalier across the face with it. In a few moments, he was lying on the turf pierced through the heart. Suddenly, he heard the sound of horses galloping towards the spot, and had scarcely time to sheath his bloody sword, before he saw a distant figure on horseback, coming rapidly down a long vista.

Prompted by revenge, he snatched the boy up, and throwing himself into his saddle, rode off *ventre à terre*. He heard the sound of horsemen in pursuit, but soon outstripped them, yet he galloped madly on. His noble grey, spurred to its utmost, tripped in a deep rut, as they passed near the orchard of a large farm-house on the outskirts of the forest: as they fell, something struck the boy a sharp blow upon the forehead, and on lifting him up, the Marquis thought he was dead. He was pursued, he had no time to reflect, so he remounted, and rode on.

"And left the poor boy to perish ; that was nobly done," said François, bitterly. "But the slaughtered man's name? you have not told me that."

"Alas ! I cannot ; the Marquis never mentioned it."

"Ha, is it so !" exclaimed François, passionately.

"On my honour he never told me the name of his rival."

"And what became of the boy?"

"I know not, neither does he."

"He lost all trace of him, then?"

"Yes, I believe he thought the boy was killed, and inquiries might have been dangerous."

"Can the dead rise again, Marinier?"

"*Diantre !* why do you ask me?"

"For vengeance," replied the young Frenchman, with a flashing eye.

"I do not understand you," said Marinier, meekly.

"Never mind, go on ; tell me what became of the lady."

"The Marquis tracked her into Italy, to Rome, and then to Naples—nay, even as far as Hamburg—there she was lost."

"For what did he follow her?" asked François, with an air of surprise.

"How can you ask me!—did she not spurn his love?"

"How did she escape him, then?"

"I know not, but I can guess; she did not fly alone. In all countries there is a secret society that thwarts many a well-laid scheme. A hidden arm turned away the blow."

"This is a singular story," said the young Frenchman, musingly. "Can it be true? it was not what I expected to hear."

"I have nothing more to tell you, Monsieur, and I must leave it to you whether it is worth a recompense."

"You have told me nothing, Marinier," replied François, with fearful *sang froid*, "that I did not already know. But this Marquis de Charolles, this Abbé Latouche, this Mister de Charolles, where is he now? Is he alive? What is he doing?"

"Pardon me, Monsieur," replied Marinier, without manifesting, outwardly, the least surprise at this knowledge of the *aliases*, "this is my secret."

"But I must learn my father's name from him, if you cannot inform me."

"That cannot be!"

"It must be!" replied François, fiercely.

"Do not use threats—they are in vain," said Marinier, in a gentle voice. "When I have disclosed to Captain Conway what I have to reveal, *he* may, if he thinks fit, tell you more of the Marquis. Yet, even that I doubt—yet, why should I? Help me to an interview with Captain Conway, as soon as he is strong enough to hear a strange tale, and then, possibly, you may learn your father's name."

"And you have nothing more to tell me?"

"Absolutely nothing."

"Then I might have saved myself the trouble of coming here?"

"You don't mean to leave me in this cursed den, at the mercy of these savages?"

"But I do, at least for the present: besides, I have no means of removing you."

"How did you come, then?"

"The Carib Chief brought me in his canoe."

At the sound of that name, Marinier was silent.

"Time for me to be off," said François, suddenly jumping up, "*au revoir*, Marinier: come, shake hands; don't think I bear you any malice for what is past and gone; you couldn't have done me a better turn. So shake hands, and I'll get you out of this as soon as I can."

Marinier glared at him like a wild beast covertly: at that moment a devilish thought crossed his mind. One push from behind as he descended the stairs. The deep water and the blue sharks—his foot slipped it well might be so—but the consequence to himself. No, it would not do; so he held out his hand, which François shook with real good-will, for he pitied the poor devil.

"Take care," said Marinier, his thoughts dwelling on the idea, "how you go down; the steps are steep and slippery. There is a rope somewhere, I can fasten it round a rock, and it is long enough to help you down the steepest part."

"Thanks, thanks," said François, waving his hand as he turned away, "I do not think I am born either to be hanged or drowned : which will be your fate, I wonder?" and he began to hum a song whilst Marinier, with a curse, threw himself on the sheep-skin.

The descent was difficult and dangerous enough, but the young Frenchman was young and active, and reached the rocks, at the foot of the cliff, in safety. Then he gave the Carib's cry, as well as he could imitate it. He was not kept long waiting, for a canoe was launched from the beach, but François saw, at a glance, that it was not Le Baron who paddled it; not that the piragua was unskilfully managed, for it was shot in a moment into the creek, but the man, though dressed the same, was of lower stature and less strongly made. It was one of the Caribs who had paddled him over the northern waters, the guide of Arthur to the negro orgie, El Duque. "Where is Le Baron?" said François, as he got into the canoe which was immediately in rapid motion.

"He up dere," said the Carib, pointing with his paddle to the southernmost cliff.

"Le Baron said he would go back with his brother: why does he not come?"

"He make talk to Caribs."

"Ha! El Duque—Caribs have tasted blood, they want to kill more negroes—is that so?"

"Brother wrong," replied the Carib, shaking his head sententiously, again applying himself to his paddle.

"Does the Carib wish to keep it hid from his brother? If so, his ears are shut."

"His brother can see well, but the Caribs have the eyes of the hawk; see from the mountain big ships come, what English call men-of-war; very big ships: see one, two, out there;" and he pointed in a south-westerly direction.

François strained his eyes, but in vain; he could see nothing but the waving ocean.

"Pose dem French," continued the savage, more eagerly than was usual to them. "Carib what do? Caribs of Saint Vincent still fight against King George; here fight for him. Dat not good; plenty Carib tink so. Le Baron make talk; him say no fight at all. Dat not good; Carib love fight. Le Baron great man;

know every tink ; talk like humming-bird ; but love English too much : plenty Carib say so."

" And what does El Duque say ?"

" He say, kill negroes ; dat very good : kill mulattos ; dat good too : but no kill white men ; dey too many strong."

" But suppose these ships are English ?"

" Den no more fight, no more talk ; all same as before."

" *Plait à Dieu !* they be British ships," murmured François, " for poor Arthur's sake. Heaven knows, I want no more fighting now. Rosalie is quite enough for me ;" and, for once in his life, he did look forward. " Should these be the promised reinforcements, Arthur would be superseded in his command. Marinier's person was known to more than one of the soldiers, and to many of the people in the town ; how could it be managed that he should have an interview with Arthur, in personal safety, and without compromising the young officer ? Le Baron might take it into his head, at any moment, to bring Marinier into Roseau ; and François was fully aware, that, since his con-

finement on the rock, Marinier had become dogged and sullen, and would answer no questions, if Arthur could not preserve his life, and give him freedom ; in fact, he had a secret to sell. Some communication must be kept up with him, through the medium of Le Baron. François, never slow in making up his mind how to act, again addressed the Carib.

“ Will El Duque whisper a word in the ear of the Captain Baron ? ”

The Carib groaned assent.

“ Tell him that his brother, the English Captain, whom he loves, wants to see him, when the moon changes.”

This was in about a week.

“ Si, si. El Duque know English Captain too. He brave man—kill negroes—dat good ! He no dead—eh ? ”

“ No. He will get well soon ; but he cannot go to the Carib’s country—Le Baron must come to him—does El Duque understand ? ”

The Carib again groaned assent.

François found Connolly waiting for him with the horses at the end of the orange grove. He

mounted, and rode rapidly off without a word : nor did he speak until he arrived at Dr. Gray's ; but, just as Connolly was leading his horse away, a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he said to the soldier :

“ Can you carry a message, Connolly ? ”

“ Iss, Sir ; as many as your honour likes. ”

“ Tell Mr. Dallas that I have learned nothing ; that the man was sulky, and would not speak freely ; but that we were right as far as we have gone. That the man insists on seeing Captain Conway, and I think he should. Can you remember this ? ”

“ Faix, Sir, my mimory is as deep as a well ; there's no bottom to it. ”

“ Stay. I had nearly forgotten something : the Caribs say that they can see two men-of-war far out to sea, but standing in for Dominica. But it is a dead calm now. However, I shall get out of the way. Tell Mr. Dallas that I start very early to-morrow for the back of the island. Here's something for you to drink my health, Tom,” and François slipped a joe into the soldier's hand, and hurried into the house.

“Och ! thin, yer honour is the real gentleman, I’m thinking ; and Ellam says he is the Captain’s brother. Sure he’s going to the Carse of Gowrie. Hurry, you beauties, or I’ll forgit what he tould me.”

* * * * *

The calm lasted all that night, and the whole of the following day. Heavy thunder-clouds rested on the mountains, and every now and then a perfect deluge of rain came pouring down, seething and foaming against the earth ; but about midnight a light breeze sprang up, and rolled the clouds far out to sea.

* * * * *

Next morning, two frigates hove in sight to leeward, and, to the great joy of the town’s people, they soon discovered, with their glasses, the Union-Jack flying at their peaks.

One of them tacked, and stood in for the island, and, in due course of time, let go her anchor in the roadstead off Roseau. The other bore away, and ran down to the westward, as if in chase of some vessel in the offing. The distant booming of great guns was heard at

intervals for some time, and, just before the sun set, the royals of a two-masted vessel might have been seen against the dark horizon.

Presently, troops began to land, and Dallas hastened down to see the commanding-officer, a stiff old Scotch Major, who took much snuff, from an old battered mull, and was a notable martinet. He heard the surgeon's report of the wounded, of the terrible vomito, and of Arthur Conway's delicate state, without moving a muscle or making any remark; but said, sharply:

"And weel, mon, whare's my hoose?"

Dallas explained that Arthur still occupied it. The Major took a pinch of snuff, and declared that he must turn out, well or ill, for was he not the commanding-officer? Dallas remonstrated, but nearly got into a scrape. This was accordingly done, and poor Arthur was compelled, that very afternoon, to move into another quarter. But instead of doing him any harm, the change was rather favourable to him.

The two-masted vessel proved to be a merchant brig, bound for Dominica. She had been

chased for a long time by two vessels, one apparently a frigate, the other a privateer. She was in great danger of being captured, for the French had sent their boats away, when they were suddenly recalled at the appearance of the British frigate, and at the same time a rakish looking brigantine was rapidly coming up, before a light flaw of wind, from the north-west, whilst they were utterly becalmed. The brigantine hoisted British colours, and she and the frigate were left in chase of the two French vessels: the merchant brig taking advantage of the light breeze, soon lost sight of them, and anchored off Roseau.

The other frigate, as soon as the troops had all disembarked, slipped her cable, and stood out to sea in chase. No sooner was she out of the lee of the land, than it again fell dead calm. Again the thunder roared hoarsely, and the rain fell in torrents.

Next morning the frigate had disappeared, and not a glimpse of a sail could be seen far or near to leeward.

For five more dull, heavy, tedious days, the

calmness of the atmosphere was perfectly awful. Every one thought that some terrible storm was brewing: the barometer went down, and expectation was at its highest.

But during that time a great alteration took place.

The Major had heard rumours and hints of dire plots and conspiracies; the island was ripe for rebellion, Republican agents were everywhere, a fresh expedition was preparing at Guadaloupe; in fact, Dominica was said to be in imminent danger, double sentries, with loaded firelocks, were posted everywhere about the Morne, the garrison of Fort Charlotte was increased, the militia were called out. Spies innumerable were sent into the town and country; all people who could not give a satisfactory account of themselves, and many could not, for the English language was utterly unknown to them, were arrested. Some were detained for trial. If the elements were calm, not so was the breast of the old Scotch Major.

* * * *

On the afternoon of the fifth day from the

arrival of the reinforcements, the mast-heads of a vessel were seen by the look-outs down to leeward.

Dallas was in Arthur's room when Ellam brought the news.

"That must be the 'Emerald;' very well, go out, Ellam; I have something to say to your master privately."

* * * *

"I tell you what, Arthur, you must do it; every movement is closely watched, every avenue so carefully guarded, that it is impossible to bring Marinier in without a great risk of his falling into this Major's clutches, and he spares nobody."

"I am ready to do anything," replied Conway, somewhat petulantly; "but see this man, I must and will."

"He must come to you, that's certain, for you cannot go to him; and he must be at liberty, or he will tell nothing. Now listen! I have no doubt but that the 'Emerald' will be in to-morrow, if not to-night, and this very night the moon quarters."

"Do you think my brain so touched, Dallas," said Arthur, with a faint smile, "that the moon quartering should affect me?"

"But it does, and will influence your fate, if you are not too impatient to listen to me."

"I have parted with that failing, I hope; it has done me mischief enough, already."

"Not so much as it will do you yet, if you don't take care," replied the surgeon, almost in the spirit of prophecy; "even now it is tormenting you unconsciously."

"Well, tell me what I am to do. I am so weak that I cannot think for myself, much less act."

"The Captain Baron comes here to-night—your brother François told him to wait till the moon changed—he is wiser than I imagined."

"How will the Carib escape the sentries? Should anything happen to him it would make me utterly miserable—my protector, my preserver."

"He has got a coat that renders him invisible when he does not want to be discovered;

but depend upon it you will see him in this very room soon after sunset."

"What, then?"

"You must write a note to Marinier to meet you—promise him what you like."

"But where am I to meet him, in God's name?"

"On the deck of the 'Emerald.'"

"I don't comprehend your meaning."

"Then I will make it as clear as daylight. Your wound is still very painful—you do not regain your strength as you ought; in fact, this climate will very likely kill you. Change of air is absolutely necessary. There is a capital opportunity—you can run down to Barbadoes in the 'Emerald.' I will settle all that with this old Scotch Major. He dare not refuse you leave."

"What, run away and leave my sweet Marguerite?"

"You would not marry her in your present state. Nay, I forbid the banns; but perhaps after all you don't care much about seeing this Marinier. If so, let him rot where he is—he does not deserve to live."

“ No, Dallas, I must and will see him—who knows but that I may, through his means, be able to offer poor Marguerite an untarnished name ?”

“ And a noble estate forebye : well, it’s worth a trial. Shall I go on ?”

“ Pray do.”

“ The Captain of the ‘ Emerald ’ owes me his life. I saved him once when all had given him over to death—he can now repay me. I will go on board and see him. All he will have to do is to lay his vessel to off the Souffrière, and fire a gun, and take a man on board—that is not much. He will be glad enough of you, for you will have to pay passage-money. You must write a note to Marinier to tell him of this, and the Carib Chief must be the messenger. I don’t think Le Baron will make any difficulty about releasing him if you insist upon it, and he must take him off in a canoe to the vessel. Do you think the plan feasible ?”

“ Yes, if the Carib comes ; but that I doubt, my luck is so bad.”

"He has never failed you yet, though you mistrusted him, as you do now."

"True, too true; still I cannot get over that dreadful feeling, that I am doomed to be unfortunate in everything."

"You will be so, till you get one thing," said the surgeon, laughing.

"And what may that be?"

"A sweet wife, to soothe your troubled spirit."

"Ah, my poor Marguerite, something whispers to my heart an ominous foreboding: shall we ever meet again?"

"Nonsense, Conway; you are getting happily over this troublesome wound. She is safe and well. When you come back, marry her, and I will give her away."

"Yes, when I come back," murmured Arthur, in a low, sad voice. "Dallas, I must see dear Marguerite once more, before I leave, to bid her farewell."

"Impossible! I will not allow it, even had you time. You might have a relapse. Even now you have agitated yourself too much. I

wish you would learn to view things more cheerfully. Now lie down, and rest till evening. I will go and settle everything with the crabbed old Major. Ellam."

The gamekeeper answered the summons.

"Your master is not to leave the sofa until my return—say about eight o'clock. Do not be surprised if an unexpected visitor enters unannounced. Pack up, in a bundle, a razor, some dressing things, and a suit of decent clothes. They will fit well enough. You need not trouble the Captain about it, but give them to the Carib when he quits, and say they are for his prisoner."

"Which of them dark chaps is it, Mr. Dallas?"

"It is the one they call Le Baron."

"Ah, if it's him, we're all right as a trivet; and he shall drink my health in the best glass of liquor I can give him."

"Mind, you keep him till I come."

"Very good, Sir."

"But you are not to make him drunk, Ellam."

"Never fear, Sir."

"Find out who will be on sentry at the stables : he may overhear things we don't want."

"It's our men to-night, Sir. If so be it's anything to do with the Captain, they are all right. Sergeant Owens commands the guard."

"The orders are very strict to arrest every one found on the Morne. Just go and whisper to him that the Carib Chief will pay Captain Conway a visit this evening. He must not be molested."

"Very good, Sir."

"You will have to go with the Captain to Barbadoes, in a day or two, Ellam ; perhaps to-morrow ; so be ready to start at a few hours' notice."

"Very well, Sir. I'll see to it directly."

"And mind, Ellam, a dangerous customer will come on board, off the Souffrière. Watch him closely, particularly when he is near the Captain. Pump him too, if you can."

"Yes, Sir : anything more?"

"Be in the way to-night : that's all."

"Now, I'll bet a guinea," said Ellam to him

self, after the surgeon had gone, "that this is that sneaking, poaching, underhand scoundrel, Marinier. If he it be, let him look out for squalls, as Gentleman John used to say. Now I must go and look after the Captain."

Ellam found him writing a letter, instead of lying down on the sofa, as the surgeon had ordered.

CHAPTER V.

MORE than a week had elapsed since the young Frenchman's visit, and Marinier was still imprisoned on the rock. He began to despair of ever escaping from this horrible captivity, and leaning over a parapet of rock, he looked into the deep, blue water, half meditating a plunge into its depths, when he felt a light touch on his shoulder. He started, and turned round. The Carib Chief was standing there with a bundle in one hand, whilst, with the other, he held out a paper to him.

Marinier grasped it eagerly, it was a sealed letter. The Carib deposited the bundle, and abruptly retired without saying a word.

Marinier tore the note open impatiently, and, with a wavering countenance, read its contents rapidly. When he had finished it, he read it over again, more slowly, with a bright light in his dark expressive eyes, whilst his haggard countenance underwent a remarkable change. The note was as follows :

“Circumstances have occurred which prevent Captain Conway from being able to extend his protection to Monsieur Marinier. He is no longer in command of the troops on the Morne. The present commanding-officer is very strict, and fresh information having been given of supposed attempts of subornation and plots, it would be very dangerous for Monsieur Marinier to show himself in or near Roseau even in disguise, as he might be recognised as a conspirator, spies being out in every direction.

“Captain Conway is about to proceed to Barbadoes for the benefit of his health.

“A vessel called the ‘Emerald’ is hourly expected, and will sail again a few hours after her arrival. She is an armed brigantine, with very

raking masts, but does not carry a pendant. She is painted black, with a narrow gold streak above and below her ports, of which she has six of a side. She is flush-decked, and painted inside of a pale pink colour. Her figure-head is a woman, holding a comb, and it is highly gilded.

“ If Monsieur Marinier thinks he can recognise the vessel by this description, and considers what he has to communicate is of sufficient importance to venture on board, he may do so in safety, that being already provided for ; but, if not, he will be conveyed to either of the French islands.

“ The Carib Chief will paddle him off in his canoe to the brigantine, which will lay-to off the Souffrière, and fire a gun. Captain Conway has sent a suit of clothes, and such articles of dress as will enable Monsieur Marinier to appear respectably.”

“ *Par Dieu !*” said Marinier, aloud. “ How the young fool plays into my hands. To have him all to myself—to be rid of that cursed

young Frenchman, with his mocking smile, his monkey tricks, and biting tongue. Well, it's worth all I have suffered in this den ! If I can but get him to throw up his commission, to desert his mistress, to run away to England—Will he take me with him ?

“He will be too late—he will find Edith married to De Charolles, the priest-marquis. What a villain that is ! but *n'importe*, he pays like a prince when he has it.

“What will this youngster do ? Hang himself ?—not unlikely. Or will he prosecute his claim to Morley ? Not he. Edith will twine herself round him. He loves her still, I am sure, for all this Scotch girl—curses on her !

“She will beg him, for her sake, to spare her father, and the weak fool will do it—anything for her sake. But the paper ! That precious bit must be carefully kept back as a last chance. A slight hint as to its existence may be thrown out as a lure, but its price must be—what ? A life and a death !

“Let me see, can I hint about its contents safely ? Why, yes. All the ports on the con-

continent are shut against the English. Hamburgh—ay, Hamburgh—is bitten by these Republican mad dogs, and has become as rabid as they. I should not wonder if their churches were stables already for *sans culotte* cavalry.

“Well, well, if I cannot destroy this young man, whom, indeed, Heaven seems to watch over, I must contrive things so as to be able to make a bargain with him. If it comes to a fight between him and the Marquis, and the boy wins (improbable as the contingency is, still there is a contingency), the Marquis will be a bankrupt, and I have not fifty pounds left. I have slaved for him, and am tired of it. I don’t like always playing a losing game.”

All that evening Marinier kept revolving in his mind different schemes for his future conduct. He viewed, and reviewed, every possible feature of the case, as a skilful lawyer does: and before sleep fell upon his bloodshot eyes, he had firmly persuaded himself that no contingency could possibly occur—no point arise for which he had not already fully prepared.

His previous defeats, so simply and artlessly

effected, did not serve as warnings, but rather acted as stimulants to fresh endeavours. He regarded them entirely as accidental circumstances, over which he had no control. But now, everything was in his own hands: if he failed, it would be his own fault; and fail he hardly could, for he was resolved to profit by the winning party, whichever that might be. Should he ruin Conway, the Marquis would reward him liberally; of that he had no doubt; for he had him in his power: and to the other, he could sell a secret.

He slept long and soundly; and when he awoke, the daylight was streaming through the chink in the roof of the cave. He shook himself, and took out a crumpled letter, and began to read it; but suddenly he replaced it, for he became aware that the Carib Chief was standing by his side. He had brought him food, and waited until he broke his fast before he spoke.

“Dress quick,” said Le Baron, “bad wedder coming, ships no wait—sea very angry soon—wind come wrong way.”

Marinier opened the bundle, and, taking out

a small pocket looking-glass, viewed his grim and haggard features with a mixture of pain and merriment.

There was plenty of fresh water in little pools all about the bed of the cave, and having shaved himself and performed his ablutions, he dressed himself as rapidly as he could, casting away his rags with contempt, and surveying his altered appearance and decent clothes with a degree of complacency. Such is fate; had he not stopped to dress himself, the end might have been—what?

“Haste, haste,” said the Carib, eagerly, “dere a flash—no tink hurricane come, but small blow come for certain.”

Another flash succeeded, lighting the cave as they left it.

Marinier followed the Carib as fast as he could down the winding stair, though he felt dizzy and bewildered, and scrambled into the canoe which, impelled by the Carib’s paddle, shot like magic out of the creek.

“Look, no shark now—all gone, dey know there nobody on the cliff now,” said Le Baron,

with a slight chuckle, for, be it observed, he never laughed.

The sea was growing troubled and angry, though as yet there was little wind, and the light canoe bobbed about alarmingly in Marinier's opinion ; but there was no danger.

The brigantine had rounded Scott's Head. What wind there was came in slight, uncertain puffs from the north-west, and all along the horizon rolled huge masses of blue-black clouds, here and there capped with a fringe of snowy whiteness. Sheet lightning, of pale and ghastly blue, was streaming incessantly along the horizon, and every now and then a zigzag flash of rosy flame seemed to dart downwards, and strike into the turbid sea.

A moment of perfect calm ensued as the canoe reached the 'Emerald,' and ran alongside ; but still the brigantine was rolling slowly and heavily, with her white sails flapping lazily against the masts.

A sailor caught the bow of the canoe with a boat hook, and it swung lightly round : at the same moment another lowered down a rope-ladder.

“Be quick, Sir, up with you, or the canoe will be staved to atoms,” cried a voice from the ship, and Marinier starting up, seized the side ropes, and began to ascend slowly and laboriously.

The Carib gave one stroke of his paddle, and the canoe shot off a few yards. He appeared doubtful, whether Marinier would not fall back into the sea.

As Marinier was thus creeping up the ladder, the vessel gave a heavy lurch, and he nearly lost his hold altogether, but a brawny seaman leaned over the low bulwark, and catching him by the collar, helped him up, but in doing so, some part of Marinier’s dress got entangled in the rigging, and he stooped down to disengage it, nearly drawing the sailor overboard.

Something dark fell. It floated for a moment close to the vessel’s side.

At that moment, Marinier was hoisted bodily on board.

The Carib gave one stroke of his paddle, whirling the canoe round, and reached the black object ere it was drawn in by the suck of the ship—no one saw him.

Then darting away again to some little distance, he stopped for a moment, and waved his hand, kissing it repeatedly to Arthur, who was standing at the taffrail, close to the stern of the vessel. Then, applying himself vigorously to his paddle, his light canoe went dancing over the dark troubled waters, gracefully and rapidly, like a fairy boat, to the intense admiration of the rough, yet jolly tars, who made many a remark on the nigger in his walnut-shell, and was soon lost behind a projecting headland.

From that moment he was never seen again by any one connected with this tale. And here we bid the faithful Carib good-by, with a parting remark.

We have often, for convenience, and because it has been the custom, called him, in this narrative, the Chief; but he was not so in name (for they acknowledge no chiefs, and, from all accounts, never did), although in reality he held nearly a supreme authority over the Caribs; so much so indeed, that, through his influence and address, they never followed the example

of their brethren at St. Vincent, who, under a chief, called Chatoy, or Chatoye, fought so long and bravely against us; perpetrating, I am sorry to say, many horrible acts of cruelty and bloodshed. But at Dominica, the Caribs either kept entirely aloof, or, if they did fight at all, they fought on King George's side.

François afterwards often thought that he had given the Carib Chief cause of offence, by refusing his offer to show him the habitations of his people; and this is not improbable: yet this man's influence on the fate of our hero did not end here.

* * * *

The storm was short, sharp, and severe; but it never amounted to a hurricane — only what is commonly called, in the West Indies, a blow.

The 'Emerald' weathered it bravely; but the agitation of the little vessel was such, that no communication between landsmen could take place; in fact, Marinier lay deadly sick in the berth that had been allotted to him, in the fore-part of the vessel; and it was not till the third

day, after quitting his prison, that he was summoned by Ellam into our hero's presence.

Let us at once proceed with

Marinier's Confession.

“ Who and what my parents were, cannot interest you ; but I was never taught any other maxim than that of providing for yourself : honestly, if you can ; if you cannot, there is an alternative.

“ I soon learnt, that whatever crimes you may commit, a cloak of hypocrisy is very useful to hide them. I was a dutiful son, a regular attendant at mass ; in fact, to all outward appearance, a good, steady youth.

“ Circumstances threw me in the way of the Marquis de Charolles, then a gay and dissipated young man : an accident placed me in his power. He did not take advantage of his discovery of my dishonesty, but attached me to his person as a useful agent in his intrigues, and as a spy upon his antagonists in play and love. I soon discovered that nothing stood in

his way, when he wished to sacrifice to these two passions ; and that, although he lived well, and kept up outwardly a respectable appearance, his affairs were in a desperate state.

“At one house he was a constant visitor. The family, I soon found, consisted of a father and daughter only. Of them I will speak separately.

“The father was a harsh and haughty man, about fifty years of age ; noble by birth, but bigoted and ignorant in the extreme. He had married a woman with a very large dowry, but the principal part of it was settled on her children. His own means were very limited, and soon became more so, for he had an intense passion for gaming. His wife had died in giving birth to a second child, which did not long survive her ; and this made him more restless and desperate.

“The daughter was lovely, for I saw her often ; her hair was remarkable for its profusion, and bright golden colour.”

“My mother !” murmured Arthur.

“The servants all loved her, though her father treated her with great harshness ; but it was

whispered amongst them that she did not confess; that she read the Bible; in fact, that she was a heretic—a Huguenot.

“ I had a difficult card to play amongst them. They were all so devoted to her, that it was dangerous to meddle with anything in which she was to play a part; but my cloak of hypocrisy stood me in good stead.

“ I soon saw that my master was desperately in love. He abandoned, for a time, all his intrigues with lofty dames, and dismissed his mistresses. He was daily at the hotel of the old Count, and I attended him there whenever he went. I wormed my way into the confidence of the household.

“ Servants have keen eyes and ready ears. I knew that the young lady did not return his love, and that there was a certain handsome cousin in the army who was not indifferent to her; but that her father had consented to a contract of marriage between his daughter and my master, though it was not till afterwards that I discovered what had influenced the old Count to agree to this alliance—it was this :

The Marquis had won an immense sum at play from him, which the Count could not possibly pay, and in endeavouring to retrieve his ill luck, my master had discovered that the dice were loaded.

“ He changed them skilfully, and the Count’s ill luck pursued him, and he lost again.

“ My master wanted money, and he loved. No wonder, then, that he urged a hasty fulfilment of the conditions he had imposed as the price of his secrecy. The day on which the formal contract of marriage was to be signed and witnessed was fixed. A violent scene had taken place between the father and daughter—this I learned from the servants—in which she positively refused to marry the Marquis. The father insisted ; but to make the story short, I need but say that when the day came, the young lady had disappeared, and could not be found. A female body was discovered in the Seine and exposed at the Morgue, which was said by many to be hers—and, indeed, it was currently believed that she had drowned herself rather than marry the dissolute Marquis—and the rumour

was allowed to spread unheeded; but we did not think so, for a letter to her father had been discovered in her apartment.

“The Marquis was frantic—ruined beyond redemption. His love, for he did love fiercely and blindly, spurned contemptuously—death or flight preferred to him. It was maddening. He upbraided the old Count, he accused him of hiding her, of keeping her away from him, or allowing her to escape. He swore he would expose him to the world—I was present. The Count produced a letter. The Marquis snatched it from him rudely, and read it aloud. I remember its contents well.

“Her father had threatened her with a convent if she persisted in refusing the Marquis—she said she would consent to neither. That the Marquis was hateful, loathsome to her, and she would not marry him. That she would not be shut up for life between the walls of a nunnery—neither would she fall by her own hand, for that was impious; she would not appear a self-murderer in the presence of her Creator. It was a deadly sin to take false vows, to love and honour one she loathed.

"It was a deadly sin to a Christian to commit self-murder.

"It was a deadly sin for a Huguenot to perjure herself by becoming a nun.

"To sum up. She had fled."

Arthur had listened gravely and silently up to this point. Though no names had as yet been mentioned but that of the Marquis, he knew, and felt that the fugitive was his mother; but when he heard Marinier say the words: "It was a deadly sin for a Huguenot to perjure herself by becoming a nun," he uttered an exclamation of surprise and pleasure. If his mother were a Protestant at that age, and it could be proved—one great difficulty was already removed.

"Did you say that my mother was a Huguenot?"

"Certainly. The letter proves it. I remember, she speaks much about the Bible in it."

"Where is this letter; is it in existence?"

"Yes; I believe so. I think the Marquis de Charolles has it yet."

"Is this your secret?"

"Oh, no, Monsieur; these are but prelimi-

naries for the better understanding of what is to come," replied Marinier, with a smile; "are you tired, Sir?"

"No, no; go on. I am all impatience to hear more."

"A scene of mutual recrimination succeeded the reading of the letter. The Count accused the Marquis of robbing him of his daughter, and ruining him. The Marquis called the Count an old swindler, a cheat.

"Swords were drawn, but no blood was spilled, for the old man, overcome by rage, fell down in a fearful fit, foaming at the mouth; and though he lingered on for a few weeks, he never recovered his senses, but died, as it were, with a curse on his lips, and there was scarcely money left to bury him.

"My master swore a fearful oath, never to rest night or day, until he should have revenged himself to the utmost upon her who had scorned and rejected his love. He sold everything he was possessed of, even to his feudal estates, and I need not say that he came of a very ancient family. With me, as an attendant,

he quitted Paris a few days only after the Count's death, in search of vengeance. I need not detail our wanderings ; but for more than three years he continued them through every part of Europe, but our search was unsuccessful. So well had they concealed their flight (for she had gone off with her cousin) that no trace was left.

"We returned to Paris ; but my master did not again mix in society ; he frequented the gaming-tables, where, for a time, he had a wonderful run of luck. There we remained in obscurity for nearly two years, yet, you must not suppose that the search was discontinued. The Marquis had agents in a hundred places on the look out, to give information.

"I began to think that she was really dead ; but he did not. Hate kept hope alive.

"One morning, after being absent all night, the Marquis entered, flushed, and in great agitation, and drawing a heavy purse, or rather bag of gold, from his pocket, he said : ' Hie out, Chaumelin, and purchase the best horse in

Paris for me, and a good one for yourself ; spare no price.'

"I did as I was directed, without asking any questions, and succeeded in buying a splendid grey horse, perfectly trained, for my master, and a good stout roadster for myself.

"The Marquis never spoke ; but I saw, by the sparkling of his eyes, that he was full of some desperate resolve. The next morning we left Paris. We rode through Sens, Auxerre, Lyons, and Avignon, until we arrived at Marseilles. There we put up at an obscure *auberge*.

"When the horses had well rested from their long journey, the Marquis said to me :

" 'Wait here, Chaumelin, until I return ; but be ready to start suddenly when called upon. I go alone.'

"He started at night, and did not return till the following evening, his horse all covered with foam and sweat, with its knees broken, and in a deplorable plight.

"He told the *garçon écuyer* that he had had a bad fall hunting, and hurriedly left the courtyard, and rushed up stairs.

“ When he had shut the door of our apartment, he threw himself into a chair, and bade me fetch wine. He drank repeated draughts of the noble vintage of that country until he became fearfully excited.

“ ‘ Come,’ said he ; ‘ Chaumelin, a toast—fill a bumper. Vengeance ! and may the end be as successful as the beginning. The tiger waits patiently crouching for its prey, but he catches it at last, and sucks its heart’s blood. See, Chaumelin !’ he cried, drawing his rapier from its sheath, ‘ see ! This good steel is dull—very dull. There is something on it. Look ! I kiss it. Its very odour is perfume in my nostrils. Drink, Chaumelin !—It is the heart’s blood of my rival ! She who preferred him living, may lie on his breathless body till it rots—her spouse and her child—a good day’s work ! Are there any more of the viper’s brood to crush ? Drink, Chaumelin—drink, I say !—another bumper ! Death and infamy to all who bear the accursed name of De la Motte !—death to all the rest, and infamy to her !—but first she must be mine, and mine she shall be, in spite of heaven or hell !’

“The Marquis poured nearly half a bottle of wine into a goblet, and drank it off at a draught.

“The effect on him was a strange one. He sank into a chair: his eye lost its flashing brightness—its malignity. His voice softened, and his features relaxed from their ferocious scowl, and he said, softly :

“‘Do you know, Chaumelin, that I still love this woman? Strange! passing strange!—is it not? but, nevertheless, true. Love and hate so closely blended! Can your philosophy, Chaumelin, account for this? Ah! had she but loved me, I might have turned from my evil ways, and become a Christian. I should not have been tempted, by the curse of poverty, to strive and rebuild my fortunes at the gaming-table. O, Eugenie! Eugenie! ‘behold your work! see to what your scorn has brought me!’ and the haughty Marquis buried his face in his hands, and for one moment relented of his fell purpose; but when he looked up again, his eyes were lighted up with the same fierce fire as before. He drank deeply, but the wine seemed to have little effect upon his brain, and before he

retired for the night he told me what had occurred in the wood.

“My master quitted Marseilles early next morning, riding the roadster he had purchased for me, leaving me to make such inquiries about the boy as I deemed safe, and to watch the movements of the widowed lady ; but whither he went, and for what purpose, I know not to this day. My efforts were very unsuccessful. The lady had never returned to the château.

“I hastened down to the little seaport-town of Frejus, and there all I could discover was that a *speronare* had sailed early in the morning for Genoa, and that a female, closely veiled, had gone on board her with a foreign gentleman. Of the boy I could hear nothing. The body of the slaughtered man was found, and a *procès verbal* was made of the circumstances ; but so mysterious did the whole affair appear in the eyes of the authorities, that they were completely bewildered. The state of the grey horse might have excited some uneasiness, but I managed skilfully to turn all suspicion aside from the real perpetrator of the deed, and it naturally fell on

the fugitive foreigner, who was discovered to be an Englishman.

“That very evening my master returned—we sold the horses, and in a few days embarked in a vessel for Genoa. But I feel that I should tire you, were I to recount the events and strange vicissitudes of this extraordinary chase. I must be brief.

“They escaped us at Genoa, at Rome they were protected by some powerful influence, and when in spite of all opposition the Marquis had prevailed against them, they had fled in disguise to Naples. There they were married under false names. Soon we were on their track, true as bloodhounds.

“The Marquis was mad with rage and spite, and thirsting for blood.

“There was no difficulty in finding a ready hand and a keen stiletto. The Englishman was imprudent, he was watched, but just as the dagger's point was touching his body, a man, in the dress of a contadino, struck the bravo a violent blow on the head with a stick, and the Englishman escaped. He took alarm and fled

by sea suddenly, and before we were prepared for it. Again we were on the track. Monsieur, you can have no idea of the wild excitement of this chase even to me : what must it then have been to my master ?

“ For a long time we missed the fugitives ; hearing of them here, losing all trace of them there. Now in Italy at a seaport, now in the mountains of Switzerland. At length, we came to Hamburgh, but not until nearly a year had elapsed since we began the chase, and there we heard that an English gentleman and a French lady were married at a Lutheran church that very morning and had sailed immediately, but no one knew for what part of the world. We embarked, at a venture, for England, concluding, naturally enough, that island to be their destination, but there we entirely lost all trace.”

“ O, God ! ” exclaimed Arthur, forgetting in whose presence he was, “ they were married then—legally married. Oh ! shame on my weak folly. I, the rightful owner of Morley, gifted with all good things, to fly like a branded felon

because a false girl frowned on my boyish love. O, Edith! had you loved me —”

“She loved you,” seemed to come as an answering echo.

Arthur started, and recollecting himself, said, sternly: “Did you speak, Sir?”

“I said that she did love you, Monsieur.”

“Take care, Sir—take care, you are treading on a mine,” said Arthur, in a low but fierce tone.

“I have nothing to lose, Monsieur, if it is fired,” replied Marinier, calmly. “I wish but to tell the truth openly and sincerely.”

“You shall render me an account for these words, Sir; and if they were lightly spoken, it were better for you that they had never been uttered.” The spirit of revenge first called up before the ruins of La Belle Étoile was whispering to him.

“Allow me to observe, that if you will have patience, Captain Conway, to hear me out, you will find that I have a good and sufficient reason for what I have said.”

“I am not one to use threats. But let me

impress upon your mind, that I am no longer to be trifled with. It is your own work, and the consequences will fall on your own head."

"I am sorry to have offended you, but I speak the truth."

"Go on," said Arthur, calmly: the cloud had passed away.

"I must hurry over the long period that ensued, before we again heard of the fugitives. There is a gap which you, Monsieur, can probably fill up."

Arthur nodded assent.

"The Marquis was utterly ruined, he had not a sou left to buy food. What induced him, I know not, but he took the vows, and entered the Society of Jesus. Such a man was a welcome proselyte. He soon became an Abbé, and changed his name, with his altered condition, to that of the Abbé Latouche, and entered zealously into the views of that Order. To the world he was an altered man, but to me he was still the Marquis de Charolles.

"The Revolution came like a thunderbolt. He would not, though he was sorely tempted,

join the *sans culottes*. A man of his unscrupulous views, of his determination, activity, and energy, might have raised himself above the crowd ; but his pride restrained him.

“ Then came the dissolution of the religious orders. He had enemies, and, to avoid the guillotine, he fled to England, and I accompanied him.

“ He had a little money by him when he arrived in the metropolis, but that soon went, and we were reduced to abject poverty, and existed miserably in a low lodging-house, in the part of London called Westminster ; the Marquis (for he dropped the Abbé) earning a precarious livelihood by teaching fencing, which enabled him to use his address in gaming, in a small way, at low gambling-houses. Once or twice, he gained a tolerably large sum of money, and then he ventured to show himself in houses where deeper play was carried on. There he met with several old Parisian acquaintances, who, being in the same predicament as himself, were as unscrupulous in obtaining the means of a scanty subsistence.

“ One day, when we actually had not wherewithal to purchase a dinner, we were surprised by a visit from one of those men, whom the Marquis had previously known, when quite a young man, in the highest society in Paris. I need not mention his name, but it would seem that he was well acquainted with my master’s disposition and previous history. He must also have succeeded in getting into some kind of society. They were closeted for some time. I listened, but they conversed in a low tone, and I heard nothing save the chink of gold. That spoke for itself: something was in the wind. At length the gentleman left, and the Marquis came back into the room where I was.

“ There was a strange sneering expression in his face, and a bitter smile curled his lip, as he said :

“ ‘ What think you, Chaumelin ? my priestcraft is to avail me at last in this heretical land. Ha ! ha ! the idea is a strange one ; but if it gives me means to purchase pleasure, it is welcome. Chaumelin, have you forgot your religious exercises ? Can you act as my assistant in administering a sacrament ? ’

“ ‘Certainly,’ I replied, ‘my master, if anything is to be gained by it; but it will first be necessary to get your robes out of pawn.’

“ ‘Ha! I forgot that,’ replied the Marquis, throwing down a piece of gold on the table; ‘go and redeem them, and buy what is necessary to make the farce complete.’

“I was absent some time, and when I returned, I found the Marquis pacing up and down the little room, evidently in great agitation. ‘Do you believe in the doctrine of chances, Chaumelin?’ said he, with an absent air. ‘Why do you ask, master?’ I inquired. ‘Because I am convinced, Chaumelin, that this unexpected piece of fortune will end in a grand *coup*. Here we are reduced to our last sou, without a hope for the future. In comes a man, and gives me five guineas as an earnest. ’Tis like doubling your last piece at the gaming-table; if the run lasts, we will break the bank.’

“ ‘May it be so,’ said I.

“Evening came, the robes were packed up in a bundle, with the sprinkling brush, a taper, and a phial of oil; and the Marquis, directing

me to follow him, in an hour, to a certain house in the Mall, issued forth with the bundle under his arm.

“It was a wild and stormy night, distant thunder rumbled in the sky, though it was winter.”

“Ah! I remember it well,” said Arthur, in a low voice; “little did I then think what was to come.”

Marinier continued, but as the reader already knows how the Abbé Latouche fared at the house in the Mall, we need not recapitulate those fearful scenes, nor the subsequent events in the progress of crime. Yet to clear up certain obscurities, it will be necessary to take up the thread of his narrative again.

“Everything was put in train to deprive you of your inheritance, whilst you were lying sick of the fever at Oxford. The report that you were illegitimate had gained ground; people began to believe that it was true, and we took good care that nothing should be left undone to confirm the falsehood. Your utter carelessness and *insouciance* assisted us wonderfully; as yet,

the cause of this was a secret. On your recovery you left Oxford, and went down to the Grange, whither your uncle had preceded you, leaving the Marquis in London to watch his interests. Indeed, my master did not wish to quit the metropolis just then, so he sent me into Devonshire as a spy on your actions. I quickly discovered that Sir Walter Conway had a daughter, whom he had never mentioned. I watched you, and followed you to the stream, where you became the accepted lover of your cousin Edith. The Baronet had acted wisely and prudently, in permitting, or rather ordering this to be, but I knew that it would not suit my master's intentions. So I despatched a letter immediately to warn him of the intended match. Do you know, Monsieur, at that time it would have taken but very little to have made me turn round, and throw my master over?

“The Marquis was furious when he heard this; for if the union should take place, it would entirely frustrate all his plans of revenge, and all hope of making his fortune from the secret he had gained. All his power over the

owner of Morley would be lost. The match must be prevented at any price.

“ You had quitted Morley to return to Oxford, happy and contented, caring for nothing but your love. The family removed to Morley, and the Marquis soon came down from London and was regularly domiciled in your uncle’s house. I kept out of the way, living obscurely, and under a feigned name at Plymouth. A cause was tried, and it went against you, but of this perhaps you are not aware, for it was undefended. Gradually the Marquis obtained a complete ascendancy over your uncle—so complete, that he soon induced him to forbid his daughter from thinking of you otherwise than a friend. I heard there were some terrible scenes ; but it ended in her giving her promise to that effect, and the Marquis left the place. I was called from Plymouth to act as his substitute, as he did not wish to appear.

“ You returned to Morley. It was summer time.

“ Do you remember one day you were fishing in the trout-stream that runs through the

park. It was a lovely evening. A soft westerly breeze driving the golden tinted clouds upwards from the gorgeous setting sun, over the deep blue sky."

A sad sigh burst from Arthur's heart.

"A pretty black-eyed girl came tripping lightly over the grass to the banks of the stream where you were casting your line on the water. You did not hear her till she was close to you—what a start you gave. Two men were watching you, I was one, the other was the girl's lover, a rough young sailor. He had come to see her and had met me accidentally, and had told me his errand. I bade him watch, and he would repent of his love—his jealousy caught fire like dried cedar chips."

"In God's name, what was this for?" cried Arthur, in amaze.

"To raise up an enemy against you. The war was begun."

"She approached you, you threw your rod down and hastened to meet her. 'A concerted meeting,' I whispered to the sailor. He cursed

me, and bade me hold my tongue, and use my eyes. You conversed for some time, and then wandered away up the glen, and for a few minutes we lost sight of you. When we again discovered you, you were lying on the grass with your head pillowed on her lap, and she was crying, and wringing her hands, and kissing you. The jealous sailor saw but the last, though I understood the whole scene. You had fainted from excess of anguish, and she was trying to restore you to your senses. Why she kissed you I know not ; but nothing could have suited my purpose better. The sailor was frantic. He swore that you had robbed him of his mistress ; that she was faithless, and he would be revenged. I knew not then to what use we should turn him, but you had gained an enemy.

“ I saw you recover, and hasten towards the house. What happened then neither of us knew, but as I saw you rush from it a short time afterwards, aghast, and in the utmost disorder, and hasten to the village of Morley, where

you shut yourself up until the stage-coach stopped at the little inn, I concluded that you had met with the anticipated refusal."

"It was there that my man Ellam saw you, I suppose?"

"Yes, Sir; I must have been somewhat careless, but my errand had evidently been successfully accomplished. You had fled.

"And now, Sir, I suppose you understand why your cousin refused, after accepting your devoted love. Think not it was because you were not the owner of Morley, nor because she did not love. It was to save her father from disgrace and ruin.

"No impediment was placed in your way when you wished to enter the army; on the contrary, I know that Sir Walter used his utmost interest to forward your views, for they exactly suited those of the Marquis, and his delight was great when you chose to enter a regiment in the West Indies. Still, the Marquis did not desire your death; his thirst for revenge was unsatisfied.

"At the end of the year '94, we heard that

owing to the numerous casualties from fever, and the bullets of the French, so much promotion had taken place in your regiment, that a company might be obtained by interest and money, provided you were ready to go out immediately: we used the interest of Sir Walter for this, and to get the man Diver appointed to command the transport in which you were to sail, and from him we learnt the probable time of your sailing for the Windward Islands, which we discovered to be your destination, and that you were to embark at Plymouth.

“It was then arranged that I should precede you there, to which I offered no objection, as I was tired of England, and wished for employment. The Marquis was liberal, and supplied me with plenty of money. His time had not come, and he trusted me implicitly.

“I was at Barbadoes when the transport arrived there. Having met Captain Diver, as agreed upon before we left England, I found that you were to go on to Dominica. I hired a fast-sailing schooner, and ran down there in less than two days.

“I had not long landed before I discovered that a wide-spread and dangerous conspiracy was on foot to deliver up the island to the Republican leader, Victor Hugues. This seemed a splendid opening, and I took advantage of it. I took the oath, and thus it was that I fell in with Monsieur Le Blanc, as he was then called. It was I who induced him to send the Carib on board the ‘Sally’ to glean intelligence. It was I who gave him such hints about you and Captain Diver, that he ventured on board himself to get this rough sailor to assist us. What happened subsequently, and how I have failed, you know. A Providence seemed to watch over you, and everything connected with your lot. Even the young man, François Devrien—”

“What of him?” said Arthur, eagerly—he had not caught the name of Le Blanc.

“He is the son of your mother, Monsieur, therefore your half-brother, and his real name is François de la Motte.”

“But,” said Arthur, musingly, “if she married her cousin, being a Protestant, and he

a Catholic, they come within the prohibited degrees, and he would be illegitimate."

"Pardon me, Monsieur, he, too, was a Protestant; and before I quitted Paris, I discovered that they were legally married before their flight."

Marinier, however, evidently did not like being questioned regarding François, probably because he hated and feared him. So he continued, somewhat abruptly: "Now, Sir, prepare yourself for strange and bad tidings."

Arthur looked fixedly at him, but he did not shrink! and the words came from Marinier's lips calmly and deliberately. "Your cousin, Edith Conway, is to be married to the Marquis de Charolles, the priest and the assassin."

"It is false!" cried Arthur, starting up, the fire flashing from his eyes—his lips compressed together and his whole frame quivering with intense emotion. "It is false—false as hell! See you not, vile man, you have betrayed yourself. I see the desperate game you are playing, but it will not succeed."

"Will you allow me," replied Marinier,

meekly, "to assure you of the fact and produce my proofs?"

"Prove this you shall, vile traitor as you are: think you, I can trust your word? Prove it, or by heaven the sharks shall feed on your loathsome carcass."

Marinier, without replying a word, produced from his breast the crumpled letter he was reading when the Carib came into the cave to hasten his dressing, and unfolded it slowly and deliberately.

"What is that?" said our hero, impatiently, "some new device?"

"It is a letter from the Marquis de Charolles to me; and it will prove my assertions to be true. Will you allow me to read it? It is in French. Shall I translate it?"

"No; it may be garbled," said Arthur, contemptuously. "Go on, Sir."

Marinier's eye kindled for a moment, but his voice was still calm as he read the letter, which we have, however, rendered into English.

"I have completely overcome her scruples

about the young man, thanks to your able assistance. Your letter, and the paragraph in the local paper, relative to the young lady at Dominica, have had more effect than threats, coaxings, or insinuations. As she believes that he no longer loves her, and she knows that her father is in my hands, she will do anything to save his honour ; and he has urged the necessity of this alliance in forcible terms, at my desire. He is breaking fast, and I must have a strong hold before he quits this world. What a different one, is it not, my friend, from the wretched time we spent in the gloomy garret in that vile city ? and better still, the old man has made his will, and I have seen it. Everything is left to her ; you see, there is expediency as well as love in this affair. I think I love her, for I am not yet too old for *la belle passion*. The young man must be kept out of the way for some time longer ; I leave that to you. Should he be rash enough, however, to visit this part of the world, I am prepared for him ; he will not stay here long. Indeed, I have left very little to chance, and could I but find the missing paper, all would be right. Don't be shocked,

my friend, when I tell you I have turned Protestant ; how sweet the wedding bells of the little church will chime—will they not ?

“ I wish the boy could hear them ; how the sound would wring his heart ! I suppose he still loves her. I know how hard it is to conquer first love, till hate steps in, and imprints the glorious everlasting feeling of vengeance on the soul, if soul there be. Love can be satiated ; hate endures for ever. Talk of the joys of love, what are they to the ecstasy of revenge ?

“ And yet—and yet it were well, perhaps, that it should be out of his power ever to visit England again. Surely, in such scenes and times as you describe, it must be an easy matter to dispose of him. Have you no Algerines ? Look to it. I shall not quarrel with you, if he disappears from the scene.

“ Edith and he must never meet. I have taken good care that no letters leave this, without my consent ; yet women are difficult and wayward things to manage, and a few words, written or spoken, a look, a sigh, may change the whole current of their thoughts and actions : so they must not meet. What-

ever happens, if he has not wings to fly with, he can never reach this before we are married, and then I defy him. Should he escape your toils, he will fall into mine. On the 1st of November drink to my health—you understand me—I send you the wherewithal. Spare it not. When the deed is accomplished, you, my friend, shall share with me. We have seen much misery together; let us try and enjoy life while we may. After all, what is this world without money?

“Farewell!”

“The 1st of November! My God! there is yet time to save her!”

“True, Monsieur; that is why I so much wished to see you.”

Had our hero not been so completely wrapped up in Edith's melancholy fate, these words that escaped, as it were, involuntarily from Marinier's lips, might have excited fresh suspicion. As it was, the effects of the disclosure of this horrible conspiracy against him, his mother, and Edith, had in some measure lost their first pang.

Arthur said:

"Pardon me, Sir, if I have become suspicious. I must have further proof, first of your intentions towards myself, and then you must convince me of the genuineness of this letter. Will you let me see it?"

"Certainly, if Monsieur wishes it," replied Chaumelin, handing him the letter.

There was a date, May the 25th, and a Plymouth post-mark on it. It was directed to "Monsieur Chaumelin, care of Messrs. Stedman and Co., merchants, Dominica," and was signed "De Charolles." As we have said before, it was written in the French language. Arthur perceived at once that the letter was genuine, and returned it to Chaumelin without reading it. Had he done so carefully, he would have seen that the words "1st of November" were written over an erasure, but he might not have detected the fact that they were not in the same handwriting with the rest of the letter, so skilfully was it imitated.

Arthur was not appalled by this fearful revelation of crimes and treachery, for he scarcely as yet believed in their reality. His open mind could not readily grasp the idea of revenge

carried on through generations. The whole story seemed so unreal, so unnatural to him, that, until the production of this letter, he had made up his mind that more than half of what Marinier had told him was pure fiction. He was too young and inexperienced to know that the romance of real life often far exceeds in horrors and extraordinary events anything that the imagination and pen of the writer can dare to present before the eyes of the public, just as there are scenes and colours in nature beautiful and wonderful in themselves, but which the most skilful painter cannot transfer to canvas.

After a long pause, Arthur said :

“ This, then, is your secret ? ”

“ It was, before Monsieur heard it. ”

“ And what do you expect for it ? ”

“ I expect nothing, but hope much. ”

“ You have owned that you are a hypocrite, why continue the folly of attempting to mask your wishes ? Speak, man ! What reward do you expect ? ”

“ At present, my life and liberty. I meant to speak openly, and I will not say that I repent of what I have done, for that would be hypocrisy,

as you are pleased to call it, neither will I say that I do not hope for some reward from you, Monsieur, when you are in possession of your rightful estates. I am sick of being always on the losing side, and wish, as the thief makes the best thief-catcher, to be employed by you, now that I have failed and been detected. Reflect, Sir, that through me you may be able to prove your mother's lawful marriage with your father. There are documents in existence that can do it. Morley may yet be yours. The Marquis exposed, and —"

"Profane not her name, vile wretch!" said Arthur, angrily. "Remember you have shown me what a villain you are, and how little you are to be trusted."

"Nay, Captain Conway, you must own that I have been a faithful servant to the Marquis whilst I had the power to be so."

"Yes, in every species of wickedness; but now, when you would turn and do good, I fear your treacherous nature."

"You wrong me, Captain Conway, indeed you wrong me. The drowning wretch catches at straws: I, to save myself, volunteered to disclose

this secret. I am too great a coward to wish to die. It was the fear of that—and I confess I deserved it—that made me do what I have done, otherwise, think you that I should have revealed this dreadful plot? Would it have been to my benefit to have done so? No. Could I have gained life and liberty at any other price, it would have been far preferable; but one cannot serve two masters. I chose the one who could give me life, with a prospect of a large reward in the vista of futurity.”

“All this is very plausible, and, indeed, not improbable,” replied Arthur; “but I want more proofs.”

“And more you shall have,” said Marinier, eagerly; and he felt in his breast for his pocket-book.

With a cry of horror, surprise, and alarm, he withdrew his hand. It was not there. He felt his person all over with one hand, then with both. He shook himself; but all in vain. It was not there.

He did not faint; but a cold, clammy sweat, bedewed his forehead, his face became fearfully pale, and his limbs shook convulsively, yet his

memory was busy within him. Had he left it in the cave with his rags? no, he had it safe in the canoe when it ran alongside the vessel, for he had felt it then. Some one might have stolen it, when he was lying sick and helpless, during the storm, or he had dropped it in his berth. Into whose hands might it have fallen? His eye glanced furtively and savagely at our hero.

Arthur looked on in great surprise, and in perfect innocence. "What ails you, Sir?" at length, he said; "you look strangely at me."

Marinier uttered a hoarse, half-suppressed cry.

"The pocket-book, the paper; gone, stolen, lost," and rushed like a maniac out of the cabin to the deck. It was pitch dark, and he suddenly felt himself grasped by somebody.

"Hillo, my hearty, whither away. Can't stop to pick you up, if you go overboard; you were precious near it, I can tell you," said a gruff, but not ill-natured voice.

Marinier broke away from the sailor with a curse.

When our hero was thus suddenly left alone, he rang a hand-bell; it was promptly answered

by Ellam. Tom had, indeed, been just outside the door of the little cabin all the time Marinier had been in it. He had not forgotten the surgeon's instructions ; and though he did not believe that Marinier was bold enough to use any violence towards his master, he, nevertheless, deemed it prudent to be close at hand.

"You are quick, Ellam," said Arthur.
"Where do you come from?"

"From outside the door, Sir."

"Then you heard all?"

"Not a word, Sir. I did not listen, but I misdoubted that poaching vagabond. I was half afraid he might do you a mischief, Sir."

"No danger of that, Ellam ; but what has become of him?"

"He rushed by me, just now, Sir, like a chased hare, looking behind him, like. It's precious dark, Sir, but I have not heard a splash. He's not the sort to be drowned."

"The rascal has been telling me a strange story, Ellam."

"All lies, depend upon it, Sir."

"Would to God, I could think so. Yet, it is very strange that no letters of any kind have

come from Morley. My God! what a situation, if this wretch's words are true!"

A cold perspiration broke out on Ellam's forehead, and he muttered: "What mischief may I not have done!" and his look was so woe-begone and perplexed, that his master noticed it, and said:

"Is it possible, Ellam, that you have guessed what is in my hand."

"No, Sir, no," stammered the gamekeeper. "It is something I have done—that I should have been so forgetful! O, Sir! will you forgive me, I've had a letter for you in my pocket this many a day—Mr. Dallas told me not to give it you till you were quite well, and I forgot all about it till this moment."

"Never mind, Ellam, I dare say it is of no consequence."

"It's from Morley, Sir, and came by this ship."

"From Morley?" cried Arthur. "Where is it? Give it to me."

Tom Ellam produced a crumpled, dirty letter, sealed with the top of a thimble, badly folded, and worse directed.

Arthur looked at the direction, the handwriting was coarse and unknown to him—but it might be feigned. It was from Morley. Oh, how he dreaded its contents. His heart beat fearfully, and his hand trembled as he broke the seal.

He had not read five lines before Ellam was terribly startled to see his young master suddenly grow deadly pale, and fall fainting backwards on the couch. It was some time before he recovered his senses, and then he lay moaning and gasping out broken sentences.

While he is in this state let us take the author's privilege, and read the letter.

“Du, Master Arthur, for the love of God, cum back quick to England, Miss Edith and all is in an awful quandary. Miss Lou has left months ago. The Baronite is in a sad way, pallalitic I heard the doctors call him. Howsumever, Miss Edith is to be married in November to the foreign Markis who lords it here, and she hates him, so du you cum hoam, Master Arthur. The servants and old Ellam says they be sure as you are the lawful master

here if you got your rights. Lord love you, your dear mother always went to church, and she been lawfully married, so du cum hoam, Master Arthur—don't let Miss Edith marry the Markis, she oughten to be yours—he be a bad un surely. Old Ellam says there be bad uns, poachers and what not, in his pay—things is all topsy-turvy. I got over to Plymouth, and he know nout of it; and sent this by an old friend, he be second mate on boord the 'Emerald.' Hoping you will get it safe, and du cum hoame from them outlandish parts.

“I am,

“Dear Master Arthur,

“DINAH DERRICK.”

Arthur had borne up wonderfully during Marinier's confession, painful as it was to his feelings, for he did not place implicit faith in the truth of these startling revelations. There was an insincerity in Marinier's manner, and in all that he said, although he strove to be frank and open. But this letter from the faithful servant completely overwhelmed him, for it confirmed Marinier's statement in every particular.

Here was no loophole by which hope might creep in and declare them false. Edith Conway! his cousin! once his affianced! to be married to a degraded priest, an assassin!

But look at Arthur. What a change has come over him in a few short minutes. What is it that has made the moanings cease? Why do we no longer hear the gasps and sighs that just now seemed to rend and tear his debilitated frame? Why do his eyes gleam so brilliantly under his knit-brows? What is it that closes his hands so forcibly, that the nails indent the flesh? Why are his lips so pale and his cheeks so flushed?

The spirit of vengeance once again.

No more the mangled corpses, the smoking ruins, and the blasted tree; no longer Marguerite and Rosalie; but fiercer and yet more terrible—his birthright, his mother, Edith, stolen, defamed, sacrificed. Vengeance again, prompt and terrible. But will it endure? Will not tears quench the flame?

“Oh! my dear young master, if this be my fault, after all your bad luck, them niggers did me a bad turn in not killing me outright.”

"No," said Arthur, with a ghastly smile, "do not think for a moment that I blame you, Ellam. This could not have been given me at a fitter moment;" and he glanced again at the letter.

"Leave me now, Ellam; I would be alone; but keep an eye on that Marinier."

"Won't you take something, Sir? You look awful pale and scared like."

"Nothing, nothing; I'm better now: the shock is over. Leave me: I want to think."

The result of these thoughts will appear; therefore we will not dwell upon them, nor upon the fitful dreams that haunted him all that night, as he lay on the couch from which he never moved until the morning broke; when Ellam came in and informed him that the vessel was at anchor in Carlisle Bay.

CHAPTER VI.

A SOLITARY brigantine is dashing gaily over the white-capped waves. Cast your eyes round the horizon. She is alone on that waste of waters.

It is a soft October day, with a light south-westerly breeze, driving the pure white gauze-like clouds, which have risen imperceptibly from the horizon, across the vast concave beneath the pale-blue vault of heaven, down to leeward, until they melt in the distant purple haze.

The air is warm and bland, but not oppressive.

Wrapt in a boat-cloak, a pale and delicate-looking young man is lying on the deck of the

vessel, near the stern. He is apparently just recovering from a severe illness.

A tall, athletic figure, but of an inferior station in society, is standing by his side, leaning against the bulwarks. He is dressed as a sailor, but is evidently not one, for his carriage is too stiff and upright. His manner, as he listens to the recumbent figure, is respectful and attentive.

"The vessel is the 'Emerald;' and the two men, Arthur Conway and the quondam game-keeper and soldier, the faithful Tom Ellam, the younger.

"Ellam," said Arthur, in a low, sweet voice, "you have nursed me tenderly through a second tedious sickness: how shall I ever repay you?"

"I don't care for nothing, Sir, so long as I see you well and happy," replied the game-keeper, sturdily.

"Remember, Ellam," continued our hero, "we are no longer the officer and the private, the master and the servant; but friends—friends for life, Ellam."

"Don't, if you love me, Master Arthur,

“speak in this way; it puts me out terrible. I know my station; and there, Master Arthur, I’ll stick to you through life and death, if need be; but I will not be one of those liberty and equality chaps. You are my young master by rights, as you was my officer; and so you will ever be, whether you get Morley or no.”

“Still you can be my friend, Ellam, I want one sadly.”

“Well, Master Arthur, I’ve no objection to that, provided you don’t put me on a level with yourself. I am your faithful servant and I ever will be: so you can say what you please before me, Master Arthur, and I’ll make so bold as to speak free.”

“Well then, Ellam, I begin to think that I have been rather rash in throwing up my profession in this sudden way—yet what could I do? It may be ruin to me to be hampered in any way even for an hour, and to be entirely free I was forced to sacrifice my commission.”

“Beg pardon, Sir, you did the wisest thing you could do; you never could have rested after what you heard from that poaching Frenchman.”

“Ay, but what if this tale of Marinier’s

should be a fabrication? Dinah Derrick's letter a forgery? How utterly I shall have been befooled! What will men say when they see in the "Gazette" the name of my successor, *vice* Conway resigned, in the height of war time too? Shall I not be marked, pointed at as a coward, a deserter? Then, Ellam, what a villain I shall seem! even now, whichever way I turn, whatever I do, I must appear a villain, a false, mean, pitiful, cowardly villain! Marguerite, sweet confiding Marguerite, I thought not of you in the wild confused turmoil of my fevered hastiness, you who have suffered so much and never repined, you who have trusted with your whole pure heart in my sincerity, my love! O, God! my love! Think of that, Ellam—think of that fair innocent confiding girl, loving as she does with her first unselfish all-absorbing passion, one who has plighted her his troth in return so faithfully, that he severs it in a few short months without a word of explanation—without a single parting adieu. There is silence in the grave, Ellam: she will think my love is dead and buried, and she will pine away and die, and I shall be her murderer."

The gamekeeper looked wistfully at his young master as if he feared that his brain was still suffering from the effects of fever, for so indeed it seemed; but no, his eye was clear, his face pale, his brow calm, and he spoke in a low, sad, clear voice.

"Brighten up, Master Arthur," he said, cheerily, "for God's sake, don't take on so, and talk in this way. You are doing what is right, and be sure Miss Margaret will think so when she hears all."

"I must speak, Ellam, for my thoughts are torturing me, and it is a relief to give them vent; and you, Ellam, are the only friend I have. The misery and sickness I have endured have, I fear, made me very weak both in body and mind, and I cannot but look upon my acts as showing it. Have I not basely deserted my duty a second time, and sacrificed a happy, loving, innocent being to my impetuous folly in too readily believing a story full of suspicion?"

"That Marinier may be a liar as well as an infernal scoundrel," replied Ellam, confidently; "but I know the man well now, who brought Miss Derrick's letter—she gave it into his own hands, and I'll swear it is true what she says."

"May be so ; but I distrust that Marinier. By the bye, what became of him ?"

"He gave us the slip at Bridgetown, Sir, while you were up with the General. I suppose he had money by him, and bribed some of the sailors to let him go. I've had a long talk with the second mate, him as brought the letter from Plymouth, Sir, about it ; and he says there be plenty of crimps' shops, like the 'Blue Anchor,' at Bridgetown, where he got stowed away till we left."

"And why did he leave us, Ellam, do you think ?"

"Why, Master Arthur, putting two and two together, I guess he has gone back to Dominica, to look for the pocket-book he lost, and raved about so much ; why, he offered a matter of fifty dollars, as a reward for it, afore he gave us leg bail."

"And so it has not been found ?"

"And never will be, I'm thinking, till doomsday, without the dark chap picked it up. But there's one consolation, Master Arthur : if that hard, old Scotch Major catches hold of him, he'll hang him, as sure as eggs is eggs ;

and I would not mind tying the knot myself—the poaching vagabond!”

“And so, Ellam,” continued Arthur, pursuing his own train of thought, while his servant was probably picturing, in his mind’s eye, Marinier hanging from the branch of a mango-tree, “you think that I was right?”

“Certain—sure of it, Master Arthur; and what is more, it has saved your life. Mr. Dallas, God bless him! will be quite glad when he hears of it.”

“Ay, he, at least, will do me justice: he will know why I have taken this step; but how will he hear of it?”

“I made so free, Sir,” replied Ellam, with great humility, “as to write a line to him from Barbadoes, when you took so ill again. I hope I did not take a liberty, but I did not like that anything should be said against you behind your back.”

“Thank God! thank God! she will hear the truth, for he is sure to see her. O, Ellam! did not I say you were my true friend. Why, oh, why, should I, who am not conscious of having offended any one, have such bitter enemies?”

"But you have a many friends, too, Master Arthur. I'm sure, there is not one, who knows you well, who would not go through fire and water to serve you; look at the soldiers, they showed it clear enough; they will miss you sadly, poor fellows. Them dark chaps, too, I don't mean the niggers—but them Indians; then, Mr. Dallas, and the French Captain—him as was taken prisoner. Lord love you, Master Arthur, you have heaps of them."

"Ah! but I have run away from them, on a wild speculation. O, heavens! that I should have to return to my own dear country on such an errand. To fight such a fight under the shade of those dear old oaks; what a welcome for a stricken man!"

"Never fear, dear Master," replied Ellam, taking him in a literal sense; "we will make it all right, when once we get to Morley. If that foreign Markis has bad ones and poachers in his pay; there is my old father still living, I suppose. I'll set him to work, and with them, as I know of myself, we'll get plenty of Devonshire lads, good and true, to thrash the whole gang. I'm not Devonshire myself; but I can fight, too, and will."

"But suppose, Ellam, I come too late ; suppose I find them already married. The murderer ! the Popish priest ! the enemy of my race ! the profligate slanderer ! clasping in his foul embrace my cousin Edith ; what should I do ? Speak freely, Ellam."

"Make her a widow, Master Arthur," quietly replied the gamekeeper.

"Ellam, you do not know what you are prompting me to ; your words are like sparks to gunpowder. God forgive me for harbouring such thoughts, they seem all tinged with blood. Oh ! may we be in time to prevent this accursed marriage, and then they will no longer haunt me. What day of the month is this, Ellam ? for I have forgotten : day and night have passed away in my sickness alike, unheeded and unknown."

"This is the 21st of October, Master Arthur ; and I heard the Captain say, when he was shooting the sun yesterday, that we was off the Azores, and if this wind held, we should sight the Lizard in seven or eight days."

"God grant it may be so," replied Arthur, solemnly.

* * * *

But, alas ! the Captain was not a true prophet ; for when nearly in sight of the English coast, so severe an easterly gale sprang up, that the ' Emerald ' was obliged to lay-to for three days.

* * * *

The 1st of November ! a dark, dreary, gusty day. The old oak-trees are sighing and moaning, and the dead leaves are whirling about in the air.

The bells of the little village church of Morley are ringing a merry chime, and the hands of the clock in the square tower are both together. Twelve o'clock is striking.

There has been an unusual bustle in the village. The miller has left his mill ; the blacksmith's hammer rests against the anvil ; the wheelwright's shed is empty ; the butcher, with his big dog ; the rat-catcher, with his terriers ; the baker, all powdered with flour ; have all gone up the street : but at this moment they are all congregated about the ' Deverell Arms.' Some are in the tap, drinking cider ; others are loitering about the porch, and criticising, in uncouth phraseology, a travelling carriage, with

four horses, which has just arrived. The postilions, gaily dressed, are taking out the horses, and putting them up at the stable of the little inn. There is a steam rising from the bodies of the animals, as if they had travelled fast and far; fast they have come, but not far; only from the inn at Plymouth, a short seven miles.

Two men, dressed as sailors, pass hurriedly through the village. Their faces are closely muffled up; but no disguise is necessary—no one notices them. They go up the hill, on the high road to London; at the top of which the road from Morley Hall joins. The lodge-gates are wide open, and they enter the park.

They seem to know their way perfectly, for shortly they strike off from the carriage-road, down a narrow footpath, through a thick belt of wood, into an open space, where, covered with late-blowing roses and fragrant myrtles, stands a neat and pretty thatched cottage. The door is open, and, as they approach, three or four spaniels rush out, barking and yapping; but presently they begin to smell round the strangers, and one jumps up and whines, and then another, and another, running between them,

and fawning first on one, then on the other, and yelping with delight.

“Down, Jet, Fan, Flash, I tell you, down,” said the taller of the two men, patting their sleek, silky heads, and entering the cottage; whilst the other man remained outside.

A tall, grey-headed man, old in years, but still stalwart and upright, came from the back part of the inside of the cottage, and met the intruder in the passage. The stranger’s back was towards the light; and the old man, not recognising him, said, somewhat sharply: “What dost thee want, my man?”

“How be you, father?” was the laconic reply of the son, holding out his hand.

“What, Tom—Tom, my boy, is that thee?” said the old man, grasping the outstretched hand, and wringing it with a will. “Oh, my old heart be indeed glad to see thee. I never thought to look upon thy face again, Tom;” and a tear trickled down the old man’s cheek. “But, Tom, surely Tom, thou hast not been and desarted thy colours; thee hast not left young Master Arthur in the lurch, in them outlandish parts,” and he let go the hand he had

all the time held in his. "If thee hast, thee art no son of mine."

"Is the coast clear, father?" replied the son. No poachers lurking about, eh? No queer ones within earshot? I've something to tell you."

"Not a soul, Tom; they are all up at the Hall, gatekeeper and all. There be casks of cider and ale broached for them that likes it."

"And why ar'n't you there, father?"

"What's that to thee, boy?"

"Don't be grumpy, father. I knows all about it. Miss Edith's wedding don't please you, that's it. There's one other don't fancy it much neither. May he come in?"

"Who, Tom?"

"Master Arthur, to be sure."

"Be he come hoam? Dang it! I be right glad of that."

"He is outside the cottage now, playing with the dogs. I'll call him in, as there's no one here but you."

Old Ellam was sincerely rejoiced to see his favourite young pupil once more beneath his roof. He, for one, had always looked upon

Arthur as the rightful heir of Morley. He had never believed the report of his illegitimacy, and somehow, he certainly could not exactly tell why, had always expected that he would come home and claim his rights when the storm that had driven him from his native country should have blown over; and it was he who had concocted the letter which Dinah Derrick had written, for, alas! he could not write himself. There was, however, no time afforded him now for explanation, for Arthur was intent upon what he had in hand. Old Ellam installed him in an arm-chair before the fire, and made him a warm drink before he would listen to anything, for he saw that he was faint and chilled.

Then a consultation was held between the three. It was soon settled that old Ellam should go up at once to the Hall, and try and see Edith in private, and give her a note from our hero. The note was quickly written on a scrap of paper, and consisted but of a few words:

“Edith, in the name of God, come at once with old Ellam to the keeper’s lodge. I am

there, and must see you. Delay will be utter ruin to all !

“ Your cousin,
“ ARTHUR CONWAY.”

When the old gamekeeper had departed on his errand, Arthur fell into deep thought. He sat perfectly still, looking at the fire, as if in the fantastic shapes of the red-hot cinders he might read his future destiny. Young Ellam did not attempt to disturb his dream-like trance, but busied himself in lighting a fire in the little floor-sanded parlour of the cottage.

The church-clock struck one before old Ellam returned.

Arthur started up when he entered.

“ Have you seen her, Ellam ? Tell me quickly. How is she ? how did she look ? what did she say ? will she come ? ”

“ I knew where to find Dinah, Master Arthur, so I looked her up first, and gave her your note for Miss Edith. I didn't tell her it was from you, for fear it might scare her, but I said it was to be given directly to her young missus. Whether she guessed the truth I don't

know, but she was off like a shot, and Miss Edith was in in a minute, looking very poorly, Master Arthur, and her eyes were very red, as if she'd been crying bitterly, poor thing! But she gave me such a look as she said :

“ ‘ Is my cousin Arthur indeed come, Ellam ? Is he here ? ’

“ ‘ Yes, Miss Edith, ’ I replied, ‘ he is surely —Master Arthur and son Tom are in the keeper’s lodge at this blessed minute.’

“ She seemed to think a minute, afore she said : ‘ Go back, Ellam, at once—tell him I will come and see him as soon as it is safe.’ ”

“ Thank God, she will come ! ” said Arthur, solemnly.

CHAPTER VII.

A LIGHT step was heard, and a female figure, wrapt in a large cloak, came hurriedly up to the door of the keeper's lodge.

Arthur flew to meet her, but he started back involuntarily as the lady threw back the hood and disclosed her features.

It was his cousin Edith, but, oh! how changed. Her face was deadly pale, save a slight hectic spot on each sunken cheek: her eyes shone with an unnatural brilliancy from the dark purple shade beneath them; her lips were thin and colourless, and the hand that she held out to Arthur was white, and cold, and corpse-like.

Arthur shuddered as he led her pale and

trembling, into the little sanded parlour. There was no greeting, and the first words that Arthur spoke were these :

“Edith ! Edith ! I have come to save you.”

“Too late, too late, Arthur,” almost shrieked the unhappy girl. “I am married.”

There was a strange expression in Arthur's eyes as she said these words. It was not love, it was not pity, it was not jealous hate, but a compound of all three that gleamed in that expressive glance, Edith saw it and shuddered, but she continued speaking. “Alas, alas ! two hours—two short hours ago you might have saved me—but now my doom is fixed—I cannot change it. God have mercy upon me.”

“Edith, Edith ! listen to me,” broke in our hero abruptly. “Your marriage is no marriage—it is null and void, a very cheat, an empty mockery. The accursed villain who—”

“Oh, spare him, Arthur, spare him, I beseech, I entreat you ! He is my husband, and I have sworn to love and honour him.”

“I tell you, Edith,” continued Arthur, almost fiercely, “that the man who has dragged you to the altar is an assassin, a perjurer, a—”

"Oh, spare him, Arthur, spare him!" cried Edith again frantically.

"No, you must hear me—it must be told," and his voice sank to a hissing whisper. "He is a Popish priest—a Jesuit. It is no marriage by any laws human or divine."

"God help me, this is too horrible," murmured the unhappy girl, sinking into a seat, and burying her face in her hands. "Would I were dead."

"Nay, nay, dear Edith, look up, this ought to console you—do not talk of dying; be yourself, and all may yet be well."

But she did not look up. This startling communication bewildered her—she could but murmur: "Would I were dead, would I were dead!"

Arthur stood beside her, pale, but as yet resolved that things should take their course. He dared not trust himself to raise her drooping form. Not then for worlds would he have touched her.

At last, without looking up, she said:

"And you have come home to tell me this—you, whom I have so deeply wronged. My cup of misery was filling fast, and you, Arthur,

you to raise it to my lips. Ah, me! what have I done that I should thus suffer?"

"Do not reproach me, Edith—I am here to protect you—to save you from this cruel fate, not to add to your unhappiness. God knows I share in it myself. Be calm, dearest, be cheered: there are yet bright days in store for you."

"Too late, too late. No hope—no consolation, no refuge but in the grave."

"Say not so, Edith, I will unmask this villain. We will declare this marriage null and void—the law shall protect you, and I will avenge you. A murderer, a perjurer, a degraded priest, can never be Edith Conway's husband—and live," he added, in a low voice between his set teeth, a gleam of revenge lighting the cloud of sorrow.

Edith raised her head and threw back with her hand the disordered tresses that shaded her face, and looked at her cousin steadfastly. She said, firmly and bitterly:

"Do not mistake my position, Arthur: you are wrong. Whatever this man may have been—be he as vile as the lowest reptile that crawls the earth—be his hand dyed in blood till seas

would not wash out the stain—let him have broken as many oaths as there are stars in heaven, his priesthood is no longer an impediment to our marriage, for he has recanted, renounced his faith, to enter our Church. O, God! forgive him this sin. The contract is valid, and I am no longer Edith Conway but Edith de Charolles.”

“A last and crowning piece of audacious villany. But I will break it, and trample it to atoms: let the vile wretch triumph in it now, I have the means and knowledge to bring him low enough, even into the pit he has dug for others. Yes, I know all, Edith—all—even to where my mother was married: do you understand me, Edith? Morley is mine—was always mine, and shall be mine. Your father—”

Edith clasped her hands together and said, piteously:

“He is ill—so ill, he cannot live long. Oh, spare him, Arthur—him at least: he is still my father; if you ever loved me do not darken his last days.”

Arthur paused. He tried to look, to feel sternly, but her appeal went to his heart; still he said, firmly:

“ On one condition only.”

“ Name it, Arthur, dear Arthur: I will fulfil it, even if it is my death.”

“ Edith, answer me one question. Has your father been the dupe of this villain?”

“ Oh, I am sure of it. He is weak but would do nothing wrong. I know not how, but this man has gained so complete an ascendancy over my poor father, that everything seems his. Yet there is, there must be, some terrible secret between them. O, God! I scarcely know what to think.”

“ Then your father insisted on this accursed marriage at this man’s instigation?”

“ He did, he did; how can you doubt it? Am I reduced so low in your estimation? Why, Arthur, he threatened to curse me with his dying breath, if I persisted in refusing to marry this hateful man. He told me that ruin and dishonour would be the portion of his old age; that nothing but this could save him. I saw him wasting away; then I wrote to you to hasten home—to you, whom I had wronged. No answer came; still I procrastinated it day after day. No letter from you. Will you forgive

me, Arthur ? I thought you were offended, and still bore resentment against me, and cared not what became of your cousin. Then, though I heard not from you, I learned from others that you were well and happy, and about to wed a lovely creole girl ; your cousin Edith was forgotten."

It was Arthur's turn to become confused ; a crimson flush passed over his face, and his voice faltered, as he said : " You are partly right, and partly wrong ; no letter from Morley ever reached me till I had quitted Dominica. But, Edith ; I never forgot you—never, never. Day and night I have thought, I have dreamed of you ; yet—alas ! must I confess it ?—you had despised my love, and I, in my madness, sought consolation in the smiles of a fair and innocent being ; God forgive me, if I wronged her. What hope had I of obliterating your image, think you, Edith, when I rushed into such a crime, offering my heart to another, when it was no longer mine, and stealing away like a guilty being when it was accepted, because a faint hope had again dawned—I will not tell you how—that you had once loved me, Edith ? Oh, fatal knowledge, for it has come too late."

“O, Arthur! hear me, I implore you. Do not let this cloud of error darken your right judgment, or turn you from the happier course you had begun. I loved you, Arthur, but as a dear, dear brother! True; I knew that your love for me was of a different nature; but I thought you were a boy, and that it would pass away like an April shower. I am punished for my perfidy in permitting you to love me. Oh! why did I not open your eyes, and show you my baseness? Perhaps I should have done so, but my father pressed, nay, insisted on my marrying you. It was then too late: I consented; O, God! It was no wonder that you thought I loved you. It was not my doing, dear Arthur; indeed, it was not. Yet, had we married, I should never have undeceived you, but have been a true and affectionate wife. Do you believe me, Arthur?”

Her cousin turned his head away, not in anger, it was but to hide a tear. She continued: “Then came a change over my father. He reversed the sentence. Arthur, I could have died for very shame. See, then, what follows—misery! degradation! and the grave! It is

yawning for me, and I do not wish to escape it. Oh! take warning, then, dearest Arthur! be not to that fair girl as I have been to you—a pitfall and a snare! love her, cherish her through life! Do not delay; seek her at once, lest her blood be upon your head and upon mine! Think, Arthur; were she to die—for such things are—who would have killed her? for her sake, for your own, for mine, return to her, and never quit her till she is your own! Leave me to my fate; pity me, and forget my unworthiness; and when I hear of your happiness I will bless you, Arthur, for listening to my words; and she shall be my sister, when I pray for those who are dear to me. Promise me this, dear Arthur, as if it were my last, and dying request—will you not?”

The hours were fast fleeting away; yet, for some minutes Arthur did not speak. She had never loved him, but as a brother. False! false as hell, Marinier's words! Oh, flattering hopes! oh, pleasing illusions! so abruptly dissipated. The scales had dropped from his eyes; oh, fool! fool! dupe of such shallow treachery! There was the reality of love; here but the

fiction of a ghastly phantom lost in the darkness of the past.

Marguerite, this was thy hour. Did thy young heart beat whilst thy rival pleaded for thee to thy fickle lover? Hadst thou known it, would it have beat no more? Happy in thy unconsciousness, thou dost but mourn his absence, ever trusting in his faith; for, in thy pure innocent heart suspicion dwells not, and now, even now, thou art triumphant—thy cause prevails.

Swiftly pass the fleeting minutes, but swifter far have thoughts arisen in Arthur's mind. Edith's words have conjured them up, perhaps too rapidly; they are a little bewildered, but now one absorbing idea prevails—Marguerite! He speaks.

“Edith,”—there is a pause, and the unhappy woman's heart scarcely beats; she is as pale as marble, and her breath seems scarcely to come and go. “If I consent to spare your father, for his life: if I must keep silence, and defer my vengeance, just and rightful as it is, for a time, you must never see this man again.”

“And you will do as I have said?” she replied, with a painful effort.

“I will.”

She drew a deep breath, as if her heart were relieved of an oppressive burthen; and, casting her eyes to heaven, she said: “Father, I have perjured myself for thee; for thee, I have perilled my immortal soul; for thee, I am now content to die. You will not curse me, oh! my Father; I can do no more. Oh, God! spare him in his old age, and turn him to Thee whilst there is yet time. Send him consolation in Thy mercy, that my loss may not be grievous to him, when Thou shalt be pleased to take me unto Thee; so will the bitterness of death be passed away.” Then turning to Arthur, she said, meekly: “I am in your hands, dear cousin; what shall I do?”

“Edith, you must fly at once.”

“And my father —”

“Must be left: I will write to him. Where is your sister, Louisa?”

“She is living with her mother, in London.”

“You must go to her; and, if she will, she may take your place at Morley: there is no

objection to that, if she does not object. The villain cannot marry her."

"But he will seek me out, wherever I may be found: he will claim me as his wife."

"Nay, Edith, I think not."

"Oh, you do not know him, Arthur. He is bold, daring, and yet crafty. I fear him, I dread his cunning; his very eyes look through you, and seem to read your soul."

"Edith, he shall not follow you," replied her cousin, with flashing eyes; but the fierce expression gave way to one of scorn, as he continued: "But I do not conceive that he will even attempt to seek you out, when he learns that you are penniless. Forgive me, dear Edith, for speaking so plainly; but your father is a ruined man, if I prosecute my claim."

"Alas! I fear it is so. Oh! my father, what has it profited you, that you have obtained the inheritance of another? What hath it been but a curse to you and your unhappy child? Oh! fatal day, that saw you take this devil into your counsel, to urge you to dishonourable deeds! Long have I suspected it; I would not believe it; but now, alas! I feel the truth, and its bitter consequences."

Tears drowned her voice, and she sobbed bitterly. Arthur attempted to alleviate her distress, and he said, kindly: "Dear Edith, I do not in the least blame your father: he no doubt believes himself to be the rightful owner of Morley. This villain must have deceived him, as you supposed; at all events, let us consider him innocent, until we have proof of his cognizance of this man's wicked deeds and worse intentions. I know this Marquis well. In his perfidious imagination he has robbed me of you, as well as of my inheritance and good name; but he shall not enjoy the fruits of these accursed machinations, not even in idea. Edith, you must write him a letter which I will dictate."

Edith shuddered at the proposition.

"Dare you do it, my poor cousin? The words will be mine, only the writing yours."

Edith laid her hand on Arthur's arm, and looked into his face inquiringly. What she read in it was unsatisfactory, for she said: "Promise me that you will not cross his path. Promise me that you will avoid his presence. I fear for your life. He is fierce and revengeful, and you are carried away by your feelings. If you meet, there will be bloodshed."

"He must not follow you, Edith. On that condition only I spare him, and he must know it. If he does not seek you, I promise to avoid him."

"But, Arthur, how am I to fly?"

"Everything is prepared for you when you are ready. I have not left it to chance, though chance has assisted me, for I had but few hours for reflection. Alas ! it was not decreed that I should arrive in time to save you from such misery. A gale sprang up in the channel, and detained the vessel, and I landed only this morning at Plymouth. I had not meant to conceal my arrival, so I went directly to the inn that I used once to frequent to obtain a conveyance to Morley. The landlord knew me at once, and told me that a carriage with four horses was about to start for Morley from his yard, to take you and your husband to the Grange. Edith, this was the first intimation of the fulfilment of your unhappy fate. I was too late to save you from the odious mockery of the ceremony, but not too late to prevent the consummation of this monster's villany. I did not hesitate. I told the landlord boldly that I wanted the carriage

myself, to carry a lady off from Morley ; that I had come home from the West Indies for that purpose ; and that I would pay him well if he gave me full command over the postilions to drive whatever road I might direct. He shook his head knowingly, and expressed very little surprise at my request, and only remarked that he feared I should be too late. No doubt he, as well as most others, looked upon me as the owner of Morley, or, at all events, as certain to inherit it. Whilst the horses were putting to, I obtained such money as is necessary for a journey, and, getting into the carriage, whilst Ellam sat on the box, I came in it as far as the turnpike, just outside Morley, and walked through the village with my face closely muffled up, that I should not be known. And now, if you are determined, Edith, to fly, I will send young Ellam to the 'Deverell Arms,' to order the postilions to be ready with the carriage at the lodge-gates directly, and he can accompany you. Edith, you may trust to him ; he is faithful and brave. But will not this Marquis be looking for you soon—will you not be missed ?”

“No, Arthur ; not for some hours, I think.

He was closeted^d with my father and his lawyer when I left the house, and he gave orders that no one should intrude on them before three o'clock, and the carriage was ordered at four ; so there is plenty of time. The servants are all more or less intoxicated already, and the house is open."

"Old Ellam shall go up to the Hall again, and see your maid Dinah. She is quick, I know, and intelligent. No doubt, between them, they will be able to bring away what you may want for the journey. Old Ellam shall explain to her what you are going to do, and her woman's wit will act in this emergency quicker than a man's. You can trust her, Edith, can you not?"

"Oh, yes, dear Arthur."

"So be it, then. I will give the Ellams their instructions, if you have made up your mind to this final step. It would not do for me to accompany you, and I must watch this man."

"And I must leave my poor father to him O, Arthur ! is there no other way ? Must I go ?"

“Do you already repent, Edith, of your determination?”

“Oh, no—no—no! Never, if I can help it, will I live under the same roof with a man so steeped in sin; but my father, my poor, stricken father! God help me! my senses are bewildered. I cannot judge what is right.”

“It is in vain to veil the truth, dear Edith. With this man your father must stand or fall, and it rests on your decision. Heaven knows I have loved you deeply and sincerely, and fain would spare you the slightest pang; but there are bounds to love and endurance, Edith. If you return to the Hall, you must be his wife; then I could not forego my vengeance. But you will not—you cannot allow him even this momentary gleam of triumph. No, Edith, it must not be, even for your father’s sake. Fly, and I will endeavour to get rid of this monster, and smooth your father’s declining path for the rest of his life. Stay, and ruin and dishonour will fall on this ill-fated family. Bethink you, Edith, with the knowledge I have gained, had I not loved you, how would the blow have fallen! I come to rescue you from misery and degrada-

tion. Believe me, dearest, I have no other motive."

"Oh, Arthur! I see the noble sacrifice you have made for me, undeserving and unworthy as I am of it: but it is a bitter pang to part from a father stricken with disease, and exposed to the malice of such an enemy, for so he will now be to him. Leave me a moment, dear Arthur, to myself. Let me pray to God to direct my choice."

Without saying a word, he quitted the room, and went into the kitchen, where the two Ellams were sitting by the fire. They both rose when he entered.

"She will consent," he murmured, "and there shall be no delay."

Without loss of time the two Ellams were despatched on their respective errands. Old Tom to the Hall to fetch away Dinah Derrick, and such things as were absolutely necessary for the journey, and the younger to the 'Deverell Arms,' to bring the carriage up from the village to the lodge gates.

When this was done, and the father and son had set out, Arthur knocked at the door—

there was no answer. He opened it. The unfortunate Edith was lying prostrate on the floor—she had swooned away. She is dead, was the momentary thought that flashed scorchingly on Arthur's brain. Oh! how the love he had once borne towards her, and which still lurked in his heart, started forth when he saw that breathless form. All his resolution vanished like the mists of the morning. She was Edith again, his once-loved Edith, not the wife of his bitterest foe. Dead! and he had killed her! His fate for ever doomed to be unfortunate!

He raised her, he chafed her temples, and imprinted a kiss on her pallid cheek. Thank God, she breathes, her eyes open, and he is not her murderer.

Edith shrank and shivered visibly when she recovered her senses, and found herself in her cousin's arms!

She released herself quickly, though she was so ill that she could scarcely hold up her head, and said, wildly, though her voice was faint:

"Touch me not, Arthur, I am a polluted, a degraded being. I have seen myself but just now as if in a mirror, and what did I behold?

a woman clothed in the leprosy of sin. Can you, will you ever forgive me, Arthur, for the wrong I have done you? Woman, woman, beware how you trifle with the hearts of the young! This is a just punishment for my wickedness; but alas, alas! I am not the only sufferer, and I can make no atonement. Earth, take me to thy bosom, for the breath of heaven is contaminated by my presence."

"Edith, Edith," said Arthur, terrified at her words and manner, "do not speak so rashly. It is good for us to suffer. If we have erred, let us strive to repent and to do what is right."

"Arthur, I have prayed, but I have not found consolation. There seemed a hollow mockery in my addresses to the Creator, for my thoughts were full of earthly things. Everything appears false and unreal, even my prayers. What atonement can I make, how can I reconcile myself to my God?"

"Edith, I do not understand you."

"Heed me not, Arthur," she continued, more wildly; "but stay. Whilst there is yet time, learn a secret. Even whilst I coquetted with you, I loved another. He was untrue to me as

I to you, or think not, Arthur, I would have consented to wed this Marquis, even to save my father. Is not my soul full of leprosy, Arthur? Can you yet pity me?"

Arthur was terribly distressed and knew not how to answer. She mistook his silence, so full of sorrow, for angry and bitter thoughts. Tears again stood in her eyes, and she said, in accents of deep anguish :

" Dear cousin, I stand in need of forgiveness. Be merciful and bear with me. Let my sorrows plead for my sins : my burthen is hard to bear."

" Edith, dear Edith," he replied, " I have nothing to forgive. Would that I could turn your mourning into joy ; but it seems the will of God that we should suffer. If your conscience, reproaches you, pray to Him, Edith, and He will make your burthen light. Pray for me, too, Edith, for my heart is full of bitterness ; and I cannot relent of my purpose against this man."

" Nor do I wish it, dear brother," she replied, quickly. " Do not mistake me. I am ready to fly. His touch is pollution ; his presence a loathing, now and for ever. It was but the keen pang of parting from my unhappy father that

afflicted me. It is over now, and I am prepared to do your will."

"You will write the letter, then, as I shall dictate," said Arthur, almost joyfully. He thought it a great point gained.

"I will," she answered, without hesitation.

Arthur tore a leaf from his pocket-book.

Edith sat down at a little table, by the case-mented window, spread the paper before her, took the pencil from his hand, and prepared to write; but her hand trembled, and a mist swam before her eyes.

It was a singular picture.

The pale and trembling woman, in her bridal dress, the very image of misery in gay attire, sitting in that little sanded room, with her head drooping over a scrap of paper, on which she was about to inscribe burning words of guilt and shame of him, and to him, who but a few hours ago had held that hand before the altar, to give and receive a mutual pledge of love and honour, until death should them part. And by her side, standing erect and resolute, with his pale lips compressed, and fire in his eye, the once gentle being who had so fondly loved her,

for the moment, stern and determined, his love laid aside like an unseasonable garment, giving place to the mantle of vengeance, how soon to fade in its turn—how soon to be rent and torn by the agonies of memory.

There is haste, and the minutes are rapidly flying away.

Arthur speaks, and at the sound of his voice the mist before Edith's eyes dissipates. She writes.

This singular letter, written in pencil, on two leaves torn from a pocket-book, has been carefully preserved, and is attached to the manuscript. The hand that inscribed these awful accusations, evidently trembled, though it is not difficult to decipher, for the writing, though feminine, is bold. There is no superscription, nor date, nor signature. This is it :

“ When I consented to sacrifice myself to you, for my father's sake, I knew you not ; but my eyes have been opened suddenly and, as it were, providentially.

“ There is now a great gulf between us, which you may never even hope to pass.

“Duty, not inclination, as you are well aware, removed all scruples on my side, and I swore to be yours. But the oath was given to a different man—it could not have been to you. It appears that you are a cowardly assassin, a gambler, a thief, a suborner of murderers, a traducer of the innocent, a spoiler of the orphan, a defamer of the dead, a perjured priest, a priest who has disgraced his order. You see I know you now. What more shall I say? You are the Marquis de Charolles, the Abbé Latouche, are you not? The master of a man called Chaumelin, or Marinier, it matters not which. It is true, then, and you are betrayed. The rightful owner of Morley is alive, and well; and but for my sake would have promptly and bitterly avenged the injury done to his mother’s memory, and the base treachery against himself.

“You are tottering to your base, but you will not fall yet, if you leave me free from your odious presence and persecution.

“This is the sole condition; but it must be kept to the letter.

“You wedded me as the heiress of Morley.

I am not the heiress of Morley, though there is no doubt of my legitimacy. You wedded me for money, and to consummate your revenge, I am penniless, and your vengeance is as a potter's vessel.

"Listen! Morley will some day have another mistress; that fair young girl, whose death or dishonour you sought, through your accomplice. Providence willed it not, and his artful and diabolical plans recoiled upon himself. Ere long she will be here.

"The hand of God is against you; therefore repent, and turn from your evil ways. As long as my father lives, and you refrain from seeking me, no further steps will be taken; but of this, be assured, that if you move a single step in advance, the sword will fall.

"I leave it to your invention, prolific as it is in resources, to explain to my father, why I have left you. Take care of him, and be kind to him, for that is to your advantage.

"Farewell, for ever! The Avenger is close at hand; therefore beware!"

Just as she had completed this sentence, there

was the sound of several footsteps, and then came a hurried knock at the door.

"The carriage is at the lodge gates, Master Arthur," said the voice of old Ellam, outside, "and Miss Edith's maid is come. She says there is no time to be lost. A bell rang in Sir Walter's room just before we left, and the lawyer's horse was ordered."

"Are you ready, dear Edith?" said Arthur; "or does your heart fail you?"

Edith bowed her head in token of assent, and rose tottering from the table; Arthur opened the door, and called to Dinah Derrick.

Brief was their greeting; but Arthur had just time to thank her for her letter, and her fidelity to her young mistress. There was no time for more.

Wrapping the cloak round Edith, Arthur offered her his arm; but she shrank from it with a shudder, and passed into the open air without speaking.

The wind blew in furious gusts, driving the slanting rain full into her face, as she left the cottage, with hasty, though uncertain steps, but

she felt it not; what cared she then for the warring elements?

The mournful howling of the gale, the moaning of the branches of the grim old oaks, the pitiless pattering of the driving rain, sang a sad and solemn dirge for thee, Edith, as thus thou wentest forth from thy home for ever. God rest thee, Edith!

There is the carriage; the horses are reeking in the pouring rain, and the postilions are shivering with the cold. Away! while there is yet time. The door is open, the steps are let down, all is ready; Edith holds out her hand to Arthur, as if mechanically. It was cold, and clammy, and corpse-like; Arthur shuddered, as he imprinted a kiss on it. She could not speak; her lips, as if frozen, refused to move, and she turned her head away, as if to hide her tears. But Arthur caught that look, so woe-begone, so despairing, so death-like. It haunted him to his dying day.

"God bless you, Edith!" was all he could say. The door is shut, and she is lost to his sight. Then he spoke a few words to young

Ellam, and as he shook him by the hand, he slipped a purse into it. Ellam mounted the box, and the carriage drove rapidly off towards London.

Arthur watched it till the hill shut it out from his view; then, with a deep sigh, he turned away, and re-entering the park, returned to the keeper's lodge.

His work was not yet done.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN we have long sought an object and found it after a tedious and difficult pursuit, how often does it happen that we discover, when too late, that the prize for which we have so eagerly searched falls far short of its anticipated value ! What from afar seemed a sparkling diamond, becomes a bit of glass when we handle it !

Who can tell, perhaps not our hero himself, what he expected to find when he threw up his commission, and quitted the island of the west ?

But Edith had never loved him.

This was the blow that broke the spell. The phantom hope that had lured him from his

duty and his love, crumbled into ashes. Always unreal, it had mocked his imagination with ideal images, and perverted his right judgment, and now he knew it.

She had never loved him but as a brother.

But would he have acted otherwise? To some men it might have been possible, but not to Arthur Conway, the creature of impulse, blown about by every wayward gust of passion. And now his position was singular and afflict-
ing. He had made two promises entirely contravening and annulling all his previous resolutions and it may be hopes. Swept away by Edith's tears, the avalanche of vengeance which he had prepared and determined to let fall on the traitor's head existed no longer, or if some portion of it did still remain, it could not fall without the traitor brought it down upon himself. And he *must* not tempt him to advance.

Forced by this to lurk unseen and unknown about the very place that was his own, and for which he had now sacrificed so much, instead of claiming it openly in the face of day and dispossessing the unrighteous usurpers with a strong and vengeful hand; forced by this to

permit the stigma on his birth to remain unwiped away, when he could so easily prove his legitimacy, and by so doing rescue his mother's memory from dishonour and expose the miserable traducer of the dead. Yet must he remain inactive. True, he was at liberty to tell the villain that his plots and wicked deeds were all laid bare, but what would such a man care for the voice of conscience? what would he care that his guilt and crimes were discovered, if punishment and exposure were not to follow the discovery? The avenger might be close at hand, but what of that. The promise to Edith was as a shield of brass to him whilst her father was alive.

But there was another promise—Marguerite. What did this involve? Either he must break his word, or go to seek her again; she could not well come to him. Could he leave England now? Could he dare to offer himself and his fallen fortunes to the gentle and afflicted Marguerite? How should he explain to her his sudden flight, and his no less sudden return, if return he did, having effected nothing, without betraying that Edith still held the sway of love

over him? Would it not be an insult to such a being to confess it?

Poor Arthur! he had never been in such a difficulty; and, to increase it, his feelings were now tending more and more towards the point they should have never turned from. Now that there was no more hope of Edith, he saw, in his behaviour towards Marguerite, a want of consistency, of good faith, that wrung his very heart-strings. Did he love her? A few hours ago we might safely have said no; but, since Edith's confession, he had turned to her who truly loved him, with an eager heart; as the traveller in the desert, long deceived by the tantalizing mirage, rejoices doubly when he discovers a real and living fountain.

Such thoughts and feelings as we have attempted to describe passed confusedly, though rapidly, through Arthur's mind, as he retraced his steps to the keeper's lodge.

We cannot give the whole conversation that ensued between the old keeper and our hero; but Ellam's replies to Arthur's questions were to the following effect. They had never attempted to get rid of him, though all the other servants,

except Miss Edith's maid, had been either sent away, or had left of their own accord. Partly, he supposed, because the cottage had been given to him by Sir William Deverell, for his and his son's life; partly, he thought, because Sir Walter and the Marquis were somewhat afraid of him, as he believed he had more knowledge of the Deverell will, and the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Conway, than he chose to reveal; but in that they were mistaken. He only knew that Sir William Deverell had never made any other will besides the one found in his fishing-case; and that he had never for a moment doubted our hero's legitimacy.

As to Miss Edith's marriage, he was very much surprised to learn that Arthur had never heard of its being contemplated, before he got Dinah Derrick's letter, as it was originally intended to have been celebrated on the 1st of September; but Sir Walter having been seized with a violent and dangerous attack of paralysis just before that date, it had been postponed, in consequence, till November.

He had had very little communication with the new servants at the Hall, who were all the

creatures of the Marquis, and who were a bad, drunken set, and did very much as they pleased, as neither Sir Walter nor Miss Edith would look after them.

The Marquis had entire command over everything, but he did not like field sports, and never rode, scarcely indeed ever leaving the house ; so that the kennel and stables had gone to ruin, and the poachers had got so much the upper hand, as he had no assistants, that there was very little game or fish left in the preserves. Altogether, times were very bad, now that the Baronet could not take the field. No company ever came to the Hall, and the only time he ever saw any of the family was at church, when Miss Edith, and latterly the foreign gentleman, used to be present at the Sunday service.

The wedding, he said, was kept very secret. Except in the village, no one knew of it, until just before it took place. He could not abide it ; and when Miss Edith's maid told him it was to be, he had advised her to send, and get the young master home, to prevent it. Somehow, letters must have been stopped from going out to the West Indies ; for she had told him that

Miss Edith had already written several times during the spring and summer, but no letters had come in return.

“And now,” said old Ellam, in conclusion, “I be right glad you be come hoam, Master Arthur, to claim your own.”

“But I am not going to turn them out, Ellam,” replied our hero, “not at present, that is to say.”

“And what be you going to do with yourself, my dear young master?”

“Heaven only knows, Ellam. But first of all you can do me a great service. It is a matter of some risk, and may get you into a scrape—that Frenchman is dangerous and deceitful.”

“And sure, Master Arthur,” replied the gamekeeper, sturdily, “it’s my business to deal with awkward customers, and I’m up to their ways, that is, poachers’ ways; and is not this foreign Markis the worst of poachers? I’m old, Master Arthur, but I’m still game, and can do a bit of work for you yet.”

“I want you to take this note and give it into his hands yourself. If he opens it whilst

you are there, watch him well; if he reads it, mark the expression of his eyes; and if he says anything, try and remember his words."

"And if he asks me any questions about it?"

"Tell him it is from Miss Edith, that is all—not a word about myself."

"I can be as mute as a dying fox, Master Arthur, and he won't get much out of me; but I won't tell no lies."

"Nay, Ellam, it is the truth—it is indeed from my cousin."

"That's enough, Master Arthur. I'm your man. Shall I go at once?"

"No, it is scarcely time yet, and I must settle what we are to do."

Arthur mused a few minutes, and then said:

"I shall return at once to Plymouth, and stay at the 'Crown Inn' till I hear from your son, that my cousin Edith is safe and well. I told him to write to me at the Post-office there, and you can do the same, taking care that your letters are not stopped; and let me know what the Marquis said and did when he received my letter, and what is going on."

The old keeper scratched his head in perplexity, and said :

“ Beg pardon, Master Arthur, but I thought I told you that that part of my eddication had been forgotten. I can make my mark or even scratch my name in a rough sort of a way, but I can’t write, more’s the pity.”

“ Then I must come over to Morley village and see you occasionally.”

“ That’ll scarcely do neither I’m thinking, Master Arthur : there be more than one know that you be come back, and you might be way-laid if they found you out. He’d not stick at trifles, depend upon it, to get you out of the way just now ; if I bean’t much mistaken there’s something about a will going on, and that’s why Lawyer Clark was up at the Hall to-day so long.”

“ True,” said Arthur, musingly, “ I had forgotten that. He might murder me—it is quite in his way. Did not you say something about a will, Ellam ?”

“ Yes, Master Arthur ; the Markis, the lawyer, and Sir Walter were closeted together, and two of the servants were sent for, Miss Derrick

said, to the library, no doubt as witnesses. It's but a guess, Master Arthur."

"A shrewd one, I have no doubt; and the sooner the villain gets the letter from my cousin the better. Now, good-by, Ellam, I shall come over in a day or two from Plymouth. Be on the bridge over the trout-stream at the dark pool about noon on each day if you can. I can hide myself there where none can find me. Your fishing lessons have taught me all the secret places in the rocks, and some day I hope, my trusty old friend, that we shall resume them. Go up to the Hall in half an hour, that will give me start enough, and I shall be at Plymouth before he has recovered from the shock."

* * * * *

Rapidly must the scenes change at this period of our history. We are now in the old town of Plymouth.

Day succeeded day, and yet no letter, no message reached our hero from either of the Ellams. Twice he had gone over to Morley to try and see the old keeper, but both times without success. He had watched the bridge for hours, but in vain; and then he had ventured to cross

the park to the keeper's lodge, but there was no sign of its owner; and on both occasions he returned by the foot-bridge before mentioned. Still no Ellam. This was startling!

One day, he casually encountered the Captain of the 'Emerald,' and from him he learnt that she was refitting as rapidly as possible, to go out again to the West Indies, with the convoy under Admiral Christian, which was then getting ready for sea at Portsmouth, to see the large West Indian fleet of merchantmen safe to their destination. In the course of their conversation, he said it was likely that he should cruise off Martinique and Guadaloupe, making Dominica his head-quarters when out there. This naturally made our hero think of his promise to his cousin Edith, and he hinted as to the possibility of his soon going himself again to the West Indian Islands. The Captain, who was part owner of the privateer, offered him immediately a free passage, and Arthur, grateful for such liberality, as his means were now limited, thanked him cordially, and said that he would let him know finally in a few days, whether his business in England would permit him to sail in the 'Emerald.'

On the seventh day from his landing in England, Arthur was surprised and perplexed to see Young Ellam in his bed-room, as he was dressing for breakfast.

There was a look of anxiety and grief in the swarthy countenance of the young keeper that bespoke evil tidings.

“What has brought you back so soon, Ellam?” said Arthur, sharply. “I thought you were in London.”

“We never got there at all, Master Arthur,” replied the keeper, gravely.

“What do you mean, Ellam?” cried our hero, hoarsely.

“I am sorry to bring you bad news, my dear young master, but Miss Edith is—”

“Dead!” screamed Arthur. “I saw it—I felt it—I knew it when you came in. Oh! my God, what shall I do—how shall I act now? I shall go mad! It is I that have killed her! God have mercy upon me! Yet I might have foreseen this—poor Edith! She was terribly ill at the cottage, and I, selfish brute that I am, let her go on the journey that has killed her. It is I, Ellam, I who am her murderer! There

was but this wanting to crown the heap I had piled up. Ellam, am I not a villain?"

The young keeper tried all his powers of persuasion to calm his young master. He had greater command over Arthur's wayward fancies, and bitter self-reproaches, than even he himself was aware of. Arthur listened to his words of consolation and encouragement, and after a time they had their effect. The gusts of anguish and self-condemnation subsided into the steady gale of real and bitter grief. Yet for hours he dared not trust himself to question Ellam, or to hear his story.

When he did tell it, it created so strong a revulsion of feeling, that energy once more took the place of miserable prostration.

"We got as far as Hungerford, Master Arthur," resumed the keeper, "but there Miss Edith was taken so ill, that we were obliged to stop. Miss Louisa was immediately sent for, and a doctor from London. I was not present, as you may suppose, when they saw the young lady, but next morning Miss Edith was a little better, and I was sent for to go up to her. She was lying on a sofa, dressed, but looking deadly

pale. There was no one in the room but ourselves. It was very awful like. She could hardly speak, poor young lady! but she motioned me to come near her. Her words were in a whisper, but yet a little wild, as if her mind was wandering a bit, but I remember every word of them, Master Arthur.

“ ‘ You have been my cousin Arthur Conway’s faithful friend: be so still to him, for he will need one. Tell him that I shall not rest in my grave if he forgets his promise. I beseech him on my death-bed to make this atonement for his erring and wretched cousin, and, as a token that she is forgiven, let him call his first-born daughter Edith. Let him not, as you are a true friend, waste the precious hours of his youth in vain regrets and useless sorrowing. Let him hasten to seek *her*, and may he find her worthy of his love. So will the memory of his cousin Edith not be accursed.’ ”

“ Don’t be shocked, dear Master Arthur; but no sooner had she said this, than I saw a sudden deep flush spread over her pale face, and the blood came gushing forth from her mouth and nostrils. I ran to the door, and

cried for help ; but before Miss Louisa could reach the sofa, a strong convulsion passed over her, and she was dead."

Arthur did not attempt to speak ; but indicated to Ellam to go on with his story, which he did, thus :

"Seeing I could be of no further use, and believing that you would not be safe within reach of the Hall, I got on the coach, and came on as far as Morley ; where I got down to look in at the lodge. Father was not there, and there were no signs of him ; no fire in the kitchen, and the rooms all untidy. I thought, may be he had joined you, Master Arthur ; but I find he has not. Still, as I knew the ways of the place, I thought I might as well take a look round, keeping out of sight of the windows. Well, I saw nothing till I came to what we call the hanging-bridge, that crosses the trout stream, where it rushes, with a fall, between the high cliffs, into the black pool, where the big fish lie. Two men were standing on it ; one was the foreign Markis, the other, a man I knew well formerly as a poaching vagabond—one Gaffeny, half Irish,

half gipsy, and whole scamp. I got near them easy enough; but the water, swelled by the rain, made such a confounded noise, that I could not hear what they were talking about; but I saw the Markis point to the deep hole below, and act a bit, as if pushing something over into it, from the bridge. Well, Master Arthur, I thought to myself, they can't be here for nothing; so I hid behind one of the big lumps of moss-covered rock, that shuts in the narrow path to the bridge.

"Presently they turned, and came back over the bridge, towards me; one following the other, for there is not room for two abreast.

"They stopped close by where I was hid, I could have almost touched them; you may think, Master Arthur, how I listened. The first words I heard came from your enemy.

" 'You are sure he comes this way?'

" 'Yes,' replied the poacher, "I seed him twice this week.'

" 'And pray what were you doing in the park?'

"The man stammered something, and looked flabbergasted. .

" 'Well, never mind,' said the Markis;

‘only, remember, I am not a man to be trifled with,’ and I saw his eyes glisten like a green snake’s; ‘a hundred pounds is a large sum.’

“I couldn’t hear any more, for they moved on, and soon separated; the Frenchman going towards the Hall, and the man directly afterwards turning back, as if to cross the bridge. Just as he came to where I was hid, I jumped out, and met him face to face.

“‘Hillo, Bill Gaffeny!’ said I, ‘what devil’s errand are you after now?’ How he did start when he saw me, to be sure. Well, Master Arthur, a little chaffing took place between us, and at last I said to him, at a guess: ‘Do you know, Bill Gaffeny, who it is you are going to duck in the river?’ Lord bless you, how he stared, and looked like a fool. I let him be a few minutes, to recover himself, then I told him how it was you, Master Arthur; for I was sure, knowing the chap well, that he was not aware of it, and I was right. He swore a great oath, that if he had even suspected it was you, nothing, no, not thousands of guineas, would have tempted him to agree to hurt a hair of your head. Then I asked him if he knew where

father was. But he said he didn't: and I believe he didn't, for he was so scared, that he could hardly help telling the truth. After I had hinted that it might not be long before you came to your own again, I found he was easily led on, so I drew him out gradually, and he confessed, under a promise of secrecy to all but you, that the foreigner had offered him a hundred pounds if he would manage to throw you over into the gully-hole: that is, not you exactly, Master Arthur, but a young man dressed as a sailor, who had latterly been in the habit of coming across the bridge. The Marquis said he was a spy upon him, and would do him an injury, and it would be an easy matter to get rid of him in this way. Bill Gaffeny was tempted by the hundred pounds, for he was terribly out at elbows, and agreed to do the job, though he didn't like it much. And now he said he was mighty glad that I had popped in the way, to prevent his doing it, for he was sure your ghost would have never let him rest, day or night. They like you, Master Arthur, in these parts; and I don't think there is one would lift a hand against you, barring a stranger.

When he let this out, I thought he might be made use of; so to make his mind easy, I told him it was not likely you would ever come this way again, till you were master, and that I would say nothing about it to any one but you, provided he would give us a helping hand, and send or bring us timely information here of any of the Frenchman's devilries. Bill Gaffeny swore that he would, and I came on to Plymouth."

"I am very uneasy about your father," said Arthur, when Ellam had finished.

"I'm not afeerd for him, myself, though, Master Arthur," replied young Tom. "He's a cute old fox; and I noticed that his gun was not at home. He is a match for more than one of them, with her in his hand: so don't think nothing of him. If he is out of the way, it is for some good reason of his own, depend upon it, Master Arthur."

"Would that I could think so," replied our hero, in his usual desponding manner: "but it seems for ever my fate, that I should drag every one who is friendly to me into danger and misfortune."

"Young Master is in one of his low fits again," thought Ellam, who was in reality as much puzzled and anxious about his father's mysterious absence as our hero: "this won't do."

* * * * *

Another week has slipped stealthily by. No news from old Ellam, no news from Bill Gaffeny, and the 'Emerald' is ready for sea. In three days she is to sail. Arthur has made up his mind to go out in her, and seek once more, in a tropical land, the lovely flower that now he longed to gather. He has heard from his cousin Louisa. She has forgiven everything, and is coming to the Hall to cherish her father's declining days. Edith rests in her grave. He remembers the promises made to her when alive: shall he break them now that she is in the tomb? Let her father enjoy, if he can, his ill-gotten wealth. It is but for a season. Let the wicked Marquis prosper in his evil ways. He is but heaping coals of fire on his own head. The time will come. It is now a good spirit that leads Arthur to do what is right, the evil one is buried deep in Edith's grave. Duty and love, his promise and his

inclination, now go hand-in-hand: revenge is lulled to sleep, and if, at this moment, his fortunes seem sunk full low, the flood-tide is making. Hope is standing on the brink, and in imagination every succeeding wavelet of time brings him nearer to the full of happiness.

Well has the faithful Ellam fulfilled the request of the dying maiden. And now he has positively refused to part from his young master. He has vowed that if he will not take him out as his servant, he will enter as a foremast-man on board the 'Emerald.' Go he will, although he has no news of his father. Nothing shall prevent him—not even our hero's entreaties and commands.

* * * * *

Once more upon the deck of the 'Emerald.' But now our hero is pacing the deck, or watching, with curious eyes, the movements of her crew.

These were stirring and dangerous times for those who trusted themselves on the rolling ocean.

The red cross and the tricolour waved defiance to each other on those trackless paths. The

mighty fleets of line-of-battle-ships [and single frigates, knights-errant] of the deep, met, and the thunder of their guns spoke out before high heaven the enmity of the nations. Stern and fierce was the contest, for he who was destined to cast the weight of his matchless powers into the balance, was yet but scarcely known to fame.

But there is a power mightier than either. Often has it been the safeguard of these heaven-protected shores, even when it bore death and devastation on its wings. At once the preserver and the destroyer, our friend and our foe—the Tempest!

It was a lovely day, and every eye in the ‘Emerald’ was turned towards the east.

In truth, it was a grand and heart-stirring spectacle. The glorious cliffs of old England loomed grand in the morning haze, while the sea, as far as the eye could reach, was studded with ships of every class, in every variety of position, with their white sails gleaming in the sun. There a stately frigate, with but little canvas spread to the light south-easterly breeze, glided slowly and majestically along; here a

deep-laden merchantman, with every sail set, yet lagging astern; there a dashing, raking schooner, laying-to; here a lumbering transport, rolling fearfully, even in the gentle swell of the now peaceful Atlantic; while far away to the east might be seen the lofty spars of a noble seventy-four, with an admiral's flag waving at her mast-head—the proud controller of the fleet.

Slowly and gracefully the 'Emerald' threaded her way through the crowd of vessels to speak the Admiral, and put herself under his orders. Ere she could effect her object, the scene was changed.

Suddenly, when off the Isle of Portland, the wind veered to the south, and dark, ominous masses of cloud arose on the horizon towards the west. Signals were made from the men-of-war to the fleet to stand out to sea and gain an offing, so as to clear the dreaded mass of rock running out so fearfully into the sea. Alas, too late! Again the wind veered, coming in sudden and fitful gusts from the south-west, with violent showers of driving rain, and the sea got up as if by magic.

Then arose a scene of confusion and distress perhaps unparalleled. The merchant-vessels and transports, short-manned and badly officered, had not time to hand their light sails before the squall struck them. Sails were torn away from the yards, or blown from the bolt-ropes. Masts and spars snapped like rotten reeds, and came thundering down, wounding and killing many unfortunates in their fall, or sweeping them away into the raging waters.

Before long, it blew a furious gale, dead on shore. We will not attempt to depict the fearful horrors that ensued. A storm, an iron-bound coast, a lee-shore, a raging sea, a confused multitude of half-manned merchant-ships and lumbering, crowded transports, tell their own tale.

But the storm off Weymouth, and along that fearful coast, on the 18th November, 1795, was long remembered for its sudden and fatal severity. Where is the 'Emerald?' She is weathering it bravely, though staggering fearfully under the canvas she is obliged to carry to keep her off the land. The sea is gushing 'clear and bright through her lee-scuppers, and the fierce waves

are washing her fore and aft as they break over her. Still she holds her own.

But see, a huge dark mass comes bearing down on her, in sad distress, yawning fearfully. In vain are shouts and cries; in vain is all the skill of the Captain and the energy of the crew: a collision is inevitable. There is an awful crash. One sinks in a few minutes into the yawning gulf. The 'Emerald' is cut down to the water's edge, her foremast and bowsprit carried clean away, her boats stove in; and in a few hours she must go down.

There is but one chance of saving any of their lives. Well does the Captain know the coast. One spot only affords a prospect of life. It is a little cove amidst grim cavernous rocks. The entrance is fearfully narrow: if they miss it, not a soul will be saved, but if he can beach her there, there is hope.

With great difficulty and danger she is at last got before the wind, and on she drives before its fury, to annihilation or safety.

* * * * *

What a crash as her sharp keel strikes the sand! Away goes the mainmast, close by the

board over her side, as she heels to the force of the first thundering breaker that comes combing and towering through the rocky gap, and lifts her farther towards the shore, grinding her against the beach as if it would tear her in pieces ; but her frame is strong and solid, and she resists it. As it spends itself, the sailors clamber over her bows, and along the wreck of the mainmast: some reach the shore, others are washed away by the relentless surf: Arthur has been struck down and stunned: another huge foam-crested wave strikes her and sweeps her further up the beach. Threatening death, it has proved the salvation of those who had clung to the vessel, for the next wave scarcely breaks over her, and the tide is beginning to ebb.

Ellam has never lost his presence of mind. When the 'Emerald' struck, and the mainmast went over her side, he saw his young master thrown down by some of the falling rigging, and he perceived, at once, that without a strong and immediate effort was made to save him, he must be washed overboard. Twining a rope, which providentially was strongly secured to a

cleet on the weather-side, round one arm, he let himself slide down to where Arthur was lying helpless against the lee bulwark, and passing the disengaged arm round his waist, he contrived to lift him, and by a strong effort, with the assistance of the rope, he recovered his position under the low but strong timbers of the weather-side, and lashing the rope two or three times round both their bodies, he succeeded in maintaining his place of security until the wreck was lifted and forced by the violent heaving of the surf, so far up the beach, that as soon as the tide began to ebb, the waves scarcely reached them. Then, with the assistance of the people on the beach, our hero was safely carried in Ellam's arms to the shore, though he still continued senseless.

There is a small village or hamlet near this singular cove, and there he was conveyed, and a surgeon sent for.

Some days elapsed before our hero was restored to consciousness. He had suffered a slight concussion of the brain, but no bones were broken, and his bruises were not of a serious nature.

CHAPTER IX.

IT was a clear starlight night when Arthur drove up to the door of the 'Crown Inn.' He felt very stiff and confused after his long drive, and when he alighted from the chaise, instead of entering the inn, he told Ellam to secure him a bed and order supper; and without any definite object, strolled up the street.

Just as he turned the corner, where hung a dim lamp, he ran suddenly against a man smoking a cigar.

Arthur begged the man's pardon, and was passing on, when his hand was suddenly grasped and wrung heartily, and the stranger exclaimed, in a strong, clear voice :

“ *C'est bien toi, mon ami.* Aha! our star is in the ascendant! *vive la fortune!*”

It was François Devrien.

In truth, the meeting was strange and unlooked for, particularly on Arthur's side. He could hardly believe it was real. Had he not felt the warm, cordial clasp of the young Frenchman's hand, he might have thought he had seen his wraith, not the living, breathing form of his mother's son. There was something, at first sight, so unaccountable in thus encountering each other in a sea-port town in England, that it had the appearance of a scene in some Arabian Night's tale, not of a simple, sober reality. But when Arthur found that his brother was actually staying at the same inn, and that Rosalie, too, was there, his wonder increased, and he grew very impatient to learn what had brought François and his charming wife so suddenly and unexpectedly to England. Arm-in-arm they returned to the 'Crown.' Supper was soon served in a warm and comfortable room, and they sat down to it *tête-à-tête*, for Rosalie did not appear; she was tired, and had gone to bed.

Ellam did not, as usual, wait at table on his young master. He had gone out, the waiter said, almost immediately after his arrival. He had bespoken rooms, and ordered supper, and then, without leaving any message, he had left, and had not returned; but Arthur was too much occupied with the new arrival to think twice about the faithful Ellam.

The cloth was cleared away. The wax candles burnt steadily, the fire blazed cheerily, the red wine sparkled and dimpled in the glowing light as they drew their chairs to the fire, when the waiter had left the room.

A feeling of snugness and comfort crept over the two young men, and Arthur felt more cheerful and contented than he had done for some time past.

"You are, no doubt, surprised to see me in England, *mon cher*, are you not?" said François, when the door was shut.

"Certainly, François, I cannot even imagine why you have come."

"My reasons were cogent ones."

"I have a strong suspicion that they relate to myself."

"You are not far wrong, Arthur, and I have a strange tale to tell you, but it is too late to-night. Though this claret is tolerable and the food not bad for an English *cuisinier*, and your company the most agreeable to me in the world, I must postpone it till to-morrow: then you shall learn all. But, instead, tell me what you have been doing with yourself and give me the *carte du pays*."

"My story is soon told," replied Arthur, with a sigh, "I have, as usual, failed. I was too late to save my poor cousin, Edith, and she is dead."

A great difficulty solved, thought François.

"And I promised her to spare my enemies. The weapons are taken out of my hands, and I am powerless."

"So said Marinier," muttered François.

"Coupled with this promise was another, that I should return to the West Indies and seek to regain what I had lost through her. It was her dying request; but the winds and waves drove me back again, and I was murmuring and repining against the will of God, and lo! you are here."

“ How happy it would make dear little Marguerite, if she could hear that you were again going out to seek her.”

“ Have I not behaved to her like a villain ? Tell me how is she ? how did she bear my base desertion of her ?”

“ When I last saw her she was well and happy. Ever trusting in your love and truth, my dear Arthur, she did not make herself miserable about your absence, and she has proved herself right. Is it not so ?”

“ I am not worthy of her, François. Such purity, such confiding, innocent love is too good for such a wretched vacillating being as I am. But I will confess everything to her, and then if she does not reject me—”

“ She will only pity you, Arthur, and love you more and more.”

“ I do not think I should have the courage to do so even now, had I not promised. I will not deceive her ; she shall know all my folly, all my weakness.”

“ Nonsense, Arthur, you know very little of such women as Marguerite, if you suppose that will make any difference. In the first place she

will not believe you. In her eyes you are the most perfect of human beings, and nothing short of your actually marrying another woman would make her doubt your faith. Jealousy does not exist in her young heart, and the very fact of your having started to go out again is sufficient to confirm her views of your fidelity. But I am glad that you did not succeed in your design just at present: I should have been sorry indeed to have missed you. How did it happen?"

Arthur related how he had been wrecked in the 'Emerald,' and that suspicions of foul play had brought him back to Plymouth. Ellam's name was of course mentioned, and it gave rise to some peculiar thoughts in the mind of the young Frenchman which will be explained hereafter.

We need not give their conversation further, as François resolutely declined telling any part of his story till the following morning, much to Arthur's surprise, for he could imagine no reason for such silence, and he could not help expressing it; but François turned it off gaily and laughingly, and offered no explanation.

When they retired for the night, Arthur asked for Ellam; but he had not returned to the inn, and the waiter knew nothing about him.

Arthur thought this strange; but stranger things were to happen.

Our hero passed a restless night, and did not rise till late. When he was nearly dressed, there was a slight knock at his bedroom door.

"Come in," he said, thinking it was Ellam; but no one entered, and the knock was repeated.

"Who's there?" cried Arthur, impatiently.

"*C'est moi*," replied a small, female voice.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" was the ungallant reply, for our hero was not in his usual good temper. Ellam's absence had perplexed and annoyed him.

"*C'est moi, la petite Fanfan*," replied the voice; "*ne me connaissez pas, Monsieur le Capitaine?* You no recollect leetle Fanfan, *chez La Belle Etoile*, ven *les nègres cruels* put him all in de fire? Eh, Massa Conway, you no recollect buckra sodgers?"

"Stop, stop, for mercy's sake," replied Arthur from the inside, alarmed at Fanfan's voluble

tongue ; " I remember you very well, *ma jolie petite*, but tell me what you want."

" *On vous attend à déjeuner, Monsieur Arthur* ; Missie Rosalie say tea poil ; pose you no *venez pas vite*, Missie tell leetle Fanfan *aller vous chercher*. See, *je vous trouve*, must come. Missie Rosalie *bien fâchée*, pose you don't."

Arthur could not refuse this invitation, though, for some reason—not a good one, certainly—he would rather have declined it.

The waiter opened the door, and announced him. Rosalie rose when he entered, and, with a smile and a blush, offered him her cheek to kiss, addressing him as her "dear brother." There was no longer any coquetry in her manner.

Arthur had not seen her since the fatal morning when the Carib had summoned him from La Belle Etoile, yet it seemed but yesterday that they had parted, now that she was again before him.

How lovely she looked ! There was a fresh glow of health on her peach-like cheeks, which he had never seen in that enervating climate ; her eyes sparkled with pleasure, pure and sincere ;

they had lost their voluptuous languor. Her dark hair, drawn back, and simply parted on her forehead, hung in large waving masses over her falling shoulders. No golden comb, with its crest of jewels, decked that queen-like head. Lovely she was always, but oh! how much more so in her simplicity!

Her greeting was affectionate, and warm with sisterly love, and Arthur's heart beat with a new feeling. He had never had a sister, now he had found one.

They sat down to breakfast.

There were three cups and saucers, three plates—in fact, everything arranged for a third person.

Arthur naturally thought it was for François, but that idea was promptly dispelled by Rosalie saying :

“François is gone out on particular business, and the naughty boy would not even tell me, his wife, what it is; but he will not be back till the afternoon: so we shall have plenty of time to have a long *cause* together after breakfast.”

Arthur did not like to ask her for whom the

third plate was laid. Had he a secret presentiment of what was to come?

Presently the door opened, and there was the rustling of a lady's dress.

A slight figure, dressed in deep mourning, entered. Arthur, who was sitting with his back to the door, rose instinctively at the sound.

He turned round.

His brain reeled. The room spun round, and he caught hold of a chair, or he would have fallen. Then a cry burst from the very depths of his heart.

"Marguerite!"

"Arthur!"

In a moment, Rosalie's presence was forgotten—the impulse was irresistible. Arthur strained the blushing, trembling little Marguerite to his heart.

In that moment, months of suffering were obliterated. In that kiss there was a promise of peace and happiness for the future.

Marguerite burst into tears, but they were tears of joy.

Rosalie looked on with a beaming smile; they were happy, and it made her so, for it

wanted but this to crown the summit of her felicity.

She had watched for it, she had striven for it, she had prayed for it ; and now it seemed that Providence had decreed the fulfilment of her prayers and wishes, by thus throwing these two together, after so strange and terrible a separation—one in a few short hours to be in the power of ruthless savages ; the other, seeking for vengeance, to find a bullet.

“Come, children,” said Rosalie, with a little laugh ; “breakfast waits ; the tea will be quite spoilt if you look any longer into one another’s eyes. Sit down, dear ones.”

The lovers blushed, and, perhaps, looked a little confused ; but they did as Rosalie desired.

The manuscript does not say what they ate and what they drank, but I should think very little, for love, joy, and sorrow injure the appetite for the moment, though it soon recovers in a general way.

No doubt it was a very—very pleasant breakfast, and it would have been perfect had François been present to partake of it.

After it was over, Rosalie left the two young

lovers together, wisely judging that they might have much to say to one another. What they did say, the reader would not care to hear. Hours passed, but Arthur had never mentioned the name of Edith. Her shadow fell no longer on his love for the winning Marguerite. She asked for no explanations—sufficient to her was the presence of her beloved. He whispered words of love and affection in her ear, and they fell on her young heart like manna in the wilderness. She fed on them, and was satisfied.

The afternoon had advanced ere Rosalie came back. They had finished luncheon, but the cloth was not removed when François entered the room. His face was flushed, and he appeared very much excited. They all rose, and grouped themselves round him when he came in, for it was evident that he brought some news. He looked from one face to the other with a strange, and yet meaning smile, which not one of them could understand, and, filling a glass of wine from the decanter, he raised it in the air, and, leaning towards Arthur, said, in a solemn voice :

“I drink to the health and long life of Sir

Arthur Conway, and the fair Marguerite !”
And

“ He quaffed off the liquor and threw down the cup,”

saying : “ no lips but mine shall ever touch that glass.”

“ Explain yourself !” cried Arthur, vehemently excited in his turn. “ What does this mean ?”

“ Simply that you are now Sir Arthur Conway, and Lord of Morley Hall.”

Exclamations of surprise and pleasure escaped the lips of the lovely creole. Marguerite watched Arthur’s countenance anxiously and timidly, as if fearing the effects of the sudden announcement on his sensitive mind. Indeed, he was so excited and bewildered by this unexpected intelligence, that he could scarcely speak.

“ Now,” said François, “ do not think me ungallant, ladies, if I request you to allow me to have a long *tête-à-tête* conversation with my dear brother Arthur : by-and-by you shall know all. Are you satisfied ?”

“ I suppose we must be so,” replied Rosalie.
“ What say you, dear Marguerite ? my lord and

master commands me, but you are as yet independent."

"Come, come, Rosalie, you know that you have your own way when you want it," said François, laughing.

"Don't believe him, Maggie dear, he is a very tyrant; even now he is bitterly impatient because we have not gone already. Shall we stay to tease him?"

"Oh, no," said Marguerite, glancing at Arthur, and blushing, "we shall only be in the way."

But Arthur did not say anything; he did not, as might have been expected, raise any objection to the banishment of the ladies.

"Come then, dear Maggie," said Rosalie, indignantly, "let us leave these ungallant gentlemen to themselves." And rising, she swept majestically out of the room, followed by her adopted sister. But no sooner was the door closed upon them than she threw her arms round Marguerite's neck and kissed her, saying tenderly: "May you be as happy, dearest, as you deserve to be. His enemies are overcome, and your trials are nearly over."

Let us now relate, as concisely as we can, the young Frenchman's story. It will be necessary to give it partly in his own words, partly in narrative, in order that the reader may fully understand it. And thus he commenced it :

" On the morning after you had sailed from Dominica I rose rather early. It was oppressively sultry, and the doors and windows had been left open during the night.

" On the table in my dressing-room I found two sealed letters ; one directed to myself, the other to Marguerite, and by their side a black leathern pocket-book. This had been apparently lately wetted, and then carefully dried. When I had dressed, I called the slaves one by one before me, and questioned them separately as to how these letters and book had come where they were. They stared in surprise, and one and all declared that they knew nothing about them."

" It was Le Baron," said Arthur. " I begged him to deliver the letter into your own hands."

" You solve the mystery easily enough ; and

so I did myself. He would not do that because I had offended him," replied François.

"But of the pocket-book, I know nothing," continued Arthur; "unless it was the one Marinier lost, and which the Carib may have picked up."

"You have hit the nail on the head at once, Arthur. It is his; and its contents may somewhat surprise you. Are you prepared to hear them? They startled me, I confess."

"Tell me first," said Arthur, seizing the young Frenchman's hand nervously, "have they anything to do with my future fate? I have been hours with Marguerite; but have not had the courage to tell her anything."

François grasped his hand warmly, and said:

"If what I have to tell you does not change the whole current of your thoughts, if it does not give you a new life; if it does not, in fact, make you what you deserve to be—honoured, rich, and happy, may I lose Rosalie's love. Little Marguerite shall be a titled lady of the land. *Dieu merci!* I have forgotten that I am a *sans culotte*, and you shall show Madame

Rosalie and myself, how you great people live in this foggy little island."

"So help me Heaven! and may God pardon me for it," replied Arthur, in a low voice; "before I met you yesterday, I was so utterly heart-broken, that I did not care what became of me. Death was in my thoughts."

"Bah!" said François, gaily, "listen to me; and depend upon it, that will be the last thing you will wish for. Have I roused your curiosity, or are you thinking of little Marguerite's blue eyes?"

Arthur motioned to François to go on.

"I gave her your note; and when she read it, I saw a tear drop gently on it, poor little Maggie! but I said nothing, either to her or Rosalie, about the pocket-book. Now for its contents. Here is the original, just as I got it."

François took out from a writing-case a shabby black leathern pocket-book, and laid it before him on the table.

Arthur was now all curiosity. He began to have an inkling of what was coming, for he remembered Marinier's intense anxiety about this book.

François drew a small folded paper out of one of the pockets, and handed it to Arthur, saying : " A dowry for Marguerite."

Arthur took it eagerly, unfolded it with trembling hands, and glanced rapidly over its contents : an unutterable expression of surprise and pleasure beamed in his eyes, and lighted his pale countenance, as he read it. Then a tear dropped softly on the paper, and he murmured in gentle accents : " At last ; O, my mother ! Great God ! I thank Thee. How inscrutable are Thy ways ; how wonderful Thy goodness ! What have I done, that I should receive this mercy at Thy hands !"

Once the young Frenchman might have indulged in a slight sneer at Arthur's words, but now, he had neither the power nor the inclination to scoff at prayer and thanksgiving ; for he believed : no, he rather joined in his brother's heartfelt gratitude for the goodness of Providence. He saw that he was much affected, and for some time was silent.

And what was this document, that had raised such grateful and pleasurable emotions in Arthur's heart ?

It was the very paper the priest, with the glittering black eyes, had removed from the velvet purse, which he had found in the drawer of the ornamented crucifix, when he so fearfully recognised the dying lady by her beautiful golden hair. It was in trying to indicate the existence and hiding-place of this very paper, that the ill-starred Eugenie excited in the physician's mind the idea that she was praying to and adoring the crucifix.

This was the paper mentioned as missing in the letter from the Marquis de Charolles, which we have read; and, to recover this very paper, Marinier left the 'Emerald,' at Barbadoes, to return to Dominica.

It was a certificate of marriage between Arthur William Conway, bachelor, and Eugenie de la Motte, widow, dated at Hamburgh, on the 20th December, 1773, and signed by the British chaplain, with all proper formalities.

There could be no doubt that this was a genuine document; still there might be considerable difficulty in proving its authenticity. There was no longer any English church at Hamburgh. Twenty years and more had elapsed

since the chaplain had signed it; he might be dead; and of the four attesting witnesses, what might have been their fate in these terrible times?

After the first glow of surprise and pleasure had passed away, a sudden chill fell on Arthur's heart, as these difficulties presented themselves one by one, to his apprehensive nature. His morbid imagination immediately conjured up before him a host of improbable contingencies, all more or less bearing on the impossibility of his ever proving his legitimacy; and he was giving vent to his feelings in a desponding tone, when François stopped him, saying: "Do not let us discuss the way and means, dear Arthur, just now; but let me rather proceed with my story."

"I will not interrupt you again," replied our hero; "but it seems so strange that you should have brought me this treasure."

"You will think it stranger when I have told you all; but, *révenons!* where did I leave off? Well, I said nothing to the women about the pocket-book that day; but when I was at leisure and alone, although I knew it was not mine, I

took the liberty to examine into its contents. The first paper I opened contained the very information I was most anxious to procure. It was a key that unlocked a deep and fearful mystery. It told me that the Marquis de Charolles was alive, and still scheming and plotting. It revealed, too, the place of his habitation. All that Marinier had withheld from me, in his confession, was made known, except my father's name; and it confirmed what Dallas and I had agreed upon—namely, that your enemy and mine were one and the same individual.

“The murderer of my father was breathing freely the air of life, and prospering in his circumstances; at the expense of you, my new-found brother.

“I read letter after letter. Some were copies of the replies sent; others, notes and extracts from different, but regular sets of correspondences, some of an old date; and among them I discovered the one, from which the scrap found at the Middle Ground had been accidentally torn.

“What a fearful conspiracy against you these letters revealed, dimly, it is true, to me, for I

had not the clue to them; but still sufficiently plain, even to my dull apprehension, to prove to me that ruin, danger, if not death, threatened you at every step. And you were gone with the very man to whom was intrusted the execution of these vile designs, as a companion. No doubt he would induce you to accompany him to England, and then what would be your fate?

“I pondered deeply, as you may imagine, on the contents and purport of these extraordinary documents, and came to the conclusion that this man, Marinier, had sought an interview with you, not for the purpose of revealing to you all the cursed treachery of the Marquis, but in order to try some new plot against your happiness or your life.

“I made a further search, and found your parents’ marriage certificate. Then a new light burst upon me. This was the secret he had to impart to you. This was what he told Marguerite you would give worlds to know.

“To make a long story short, I will not tell you all that passed in my mind; but I was in a strange perplexity. Had I not been encumbered with a wife, I should not for a moment have

hesitated. I should have immediately applied for permission to follow you as a prisoner on parole to England, if necessary. But what was to be done with the two women, unprotected, in such unsettled times ? two, I say, for Marguerite had already agreed to live with us. Rosalie at length perceived that I had something on my mind. Women are quick-witted and curious ; and I could not conceal my anxiety from her. Knowing that she would not rest, I told her at once the whole story.

“She did not hesitate. ‘Let us all go to England,’ she said. ‘Let us sell part, if not all, of our property here. Arthur Conway is your brother, I am your wife, we are both British subjects, and you, perforce, must become one too, for you can never again join the Republicans. Dear old England is the place for us, for we are not poor ; and Marguerite will be rejoiced to see it again. Let us leave this too fatal island, if she will consent ; but without her I will not go. Write to your friend, Doctor Dallas, and see what he says ; and I will consult Marguerite.’

“Rosalie’s advice was good, but I could not

make up my mind so suddenly. It looked like deserting my colours, besides, I had property at Guadaloupe, and I could not well sacrifice that. By the by, I managed to dispose of it easily enough after all, and have got bills for it on a house at Marseilles.

“In this uncertainty, I let several days slip by, but at last I made up my mind and wrote a note to Dallas, requesting him to ride over to the Carse of Gowrie, as I had a very important communication to make to him concerning you. When his answer came, I found that he was too busy to quit the Morne. The vomito was raging amongst the men, and the hospital was full, but he said if I would come over to Roseau, I was in no kind of danger, and he would be very happy to see me. Enclosed was a very pressing invitation from Doctor Gray to all three of us to stay in his house as long as we liked. There was a solemn council held between those concerned, but as the ladies had made up their minds, and were two to one, I had very little chance, even if I had wished to oppose their determination, which was to go to England, home as they called it (though I know

not what right Rosalie had to consider it as such), if it was thought expedient by the good surgeon, and I had very little doubt in my mind what his advice would be. So I yielded with a good grace and wrote again to Dallas, and we forthwith commenced preparations for a departure to Roseau in the first instance.

“ Whilst we were making these arrangements, I was surprised one day by the appearance of a soldier with an official despatch for me, and a note from our firm friend Dallas. I must confess that I was rather startled and alarmed at this unexpected event; but the contents of the official letter changed my alarm into astonishment. I have kept it, here it is :

“ ‘ Sir,

“ ‘ A Frenchman named Marinier, or Chaumelin, has been arrested as a conspirator and spy. The charges have been fully proved against him before a court-martial, and he has been condemned to be hanged. He has made a pressing request to have an interview with you before his death, and a respite has been

accorded to him until your answer is received,

(Signed)

“ ‘ &c., &c., &c.’ ”

“ The note from Dallas was brief and simple.

“ ‘ Come at once. The ruffian says he has much to tell you about Conway. It was with some difficulty that I obtained the favour of a respite. You are now looked upon as a British subject, consequently there is no danger to your person. Best regards to Madame, and La Belle Ecossaise.

“ ‘ N.B.—There is a fine brig^g loading for the West of England in the roadstead—she will be ready to sail in a few weeks.’ ”

“ I will now suppose that we are all under the hospitable roof of Dr. Gray. It was evening when I went up to Morne Bruce and called upon Dallas. I found that the wretched Mari-
nier was to be hanged early the next morning, whether I came or not, and that half an hour only was granted for an interview. Now I

learnt for the first time that you were actually on your way to England, having thrown up your commission at Barbadoes. This intelligence came from your faithful friend, Ellam, who said that you were too ill to write yourself.

“I was now rejoiced, that our determination had been taken, for, no doubt, you had been induced to take this wild, and apparently, extraordinary step, under the influence of some villanous treachery; my only fear was, that I might be too late.

“The sergeant of the guard came to Dallas’s quarters, and informed me that the prisoner was ready to see me. As I approached the building, where he was confined, with the sergeant carrying the key to admit me, the sentry saluted as if I was one of his own officers. I looked hard at him, and found it was my old valet, Tom Connolly. He grinned, but did not speak, such being the etiquette. I found the poor wretch, Marinier, in a deplorable plight, and, at first, I felt a degree of pity for him. He was haggard, pale, and dejected; and no wonder, for he was chained and handcuffed, in a dark and mouldy dungeon, with a sentry

keeping guard on him, and in a few hours he was to die. He scarcely stirred when I entered. The sergeant locked the door on us, saying that he would come for me in half an hour, and we were left alone. I sat down on an old box, half eaten by the ants, that rested in a corner of the filthy dungeon.

“‘Ha, Marinier!’ I said, ‘I am sorry to see you in such a condition. What can I do to serve you?’

“‘Spare your fine speeches, Monsieur Le Blanc,’ he replied, in a sneering bitter tone. ‘Hypocrisy is ever shallow. There is very little love between us, though we were once fellow-conspirators.’

“I winced a little at this; for I had not quite got over the idea of being arrested as a spy.

“Marinier saw it, and a slight smile curled his lip, as he said: ‘I am condemned to die; and you know it! No power on earth can save me; but I have lost the desire to drag you down with me, even if I could. I wanted you for another purpose, and they granted me an interview, as a favour—the canting miscreants! a favour to a man with a rope round his neck.’

Then he suddenly changed his tone, and said, savagely: 'Time presses. Curses on that wily De Charolles; I have lost everything for him—pleasure! liberty! nay, life itself! whilst doing his bidding. Think you I served him from liking or gratitude, Monsieur Le Blanc, though he did once save me from the *conciergerie*. No! I got my living by him, such as it was; and now, when I could have made a good thing of it, one way or the other, a cursed fatality robs me of the means. Ah! and he was growing rich, too; but he shall not enjoy his wealth, though I die like a rotten sheep, here, in this paltry place; no! not although I have lost my pocket-book, with all the documents, that could avail against him in it. No, no! I'll set you on the track, and you shall hunt him down.'

"Armed with foreknowledge, and wishing to search his soul, I said, carelessly: 'And who do you think has stolen your pocket-book?'

"'The Carib,' he replied with a snarl, like a hungry wolf, 'that sneaking painted savage, who has been my bane and curse in this pestilent island.'

“ ‘And what, in the devil’s name, may I ask, Marinier, induced you to return here, where your person was so well known, when you had got away so snugly ?’

“ ‘What is life worth without the means of keeping it comfortably? In that book was a paper worth thousands; but don’t think I am telling you all this as a favour. No; I hate you all, root and branch. Don’t think it is for love of Captain Conway, or for your own sake; but it’s justice, Monsieur Le Blanc—simple justice, I want.’ And he laughed a horrid laugh.

“ ‘Justice on whom?’ I said, though I knew very well what he was driving at. ‘And how can I serve you?’

“ ‘Ah! if I could but be sure you would do what I wish, I should die satisfied.’

“ ‘Tell me what you want, and I will see if it is to be done, though I don’t owe you much.’

“ ‘There we are equal, for it was you who first brought that cunning savage to stand for ever in my path; but that’s past and gone. Listen! I lately thought that I could make something out of Captain Conway, if the Marquis failed

me; and I played a deep game for it. Look you, when I got my liberty, I forged a date. He didn't find it out, though he read the letter. I put it into his hands, and ran the risk. Ha! ha! He thinks his cousin, Edith Conway, is to be married in November, and he is gone to England to forbid the banns: it amuses me this. She will have been wedded two months before he gets home. I poisoned his ears. I hurried him away, because he was getting too happy here with that Scotch girl: he would have married her and ruined all.

“ ‘He is gone home, but he won't touch the Marquis, not he, for he still loves his cousin Edith, poor fool! A believer in woman's constancy! how easily he was duped. I made him believe that she had loved him all through, and that she had been forced into this match. So he loves her still, and she will come round him as only woman can. What a weak fool he has proved himself! Now I have made him miserable, don't you see? His cousin Edith is miserable enough already, for she hates the Marquis. This Scotch girl will find herself forsaken; she will pine away and die. So

far so good, and all this done for his sake; but I don't want the Marquis to triumph now, though he is my old master. As I cannot enjoy life, neither shall he. We have long rowed in the same boat, and we must sink together.'

" 'Now for it,' I thought.

" 'I don't love you much, but you are the only one who cannot gain by my death; and as I have sworn to myself that the Marquis shall not enjoy his success alone, and I cannot share it, you must be the hurricane to sink him. Motives you have in plenty. He murdered your father in cold blood, and it is not improbable that, ere long, your brother may share the same fate. He persecuted and traduced your mother. You are both fiery and revengeful, and I do not think you are one likely to forget all this. Have I chosen well my instrument of vengeance, or will you live on tamely, knowing what you do?'

" 'Go on,' I said; 'be more explicit.'

" 'I will,' he replied, 'there is a fire in your eyes, that pleases me. The Marquis is living on the fat of the land, at a place called Morley Hall, not far from the sea-port of Plymouth, on the west coast of England, with the uncle of

Captain Conway—Sir Walter he is called. He has by this time married his daughter, and will succeed to the property ; for he is cunning and avaricious, as he is fierce and revengeful. See what he has done. He stole the marriage certificate of Captain Conway's parents from the mother, when she was on her death-bed, and has held this *in terrorem* over the weak and criminal old man, his uncle : but he did not keep it long in his possession, though he has preserved and even augmented his power and influence over the palsy-stricken and guilty Baronet without it. What he endeavoured to do here, through me, you know.'

" I nodded assent.

" ' Yet this is not all. In his last letter to me, he desired me to procure Captain Conway's death ; to murder him, in short. But this did not suit my plans ; so, before I lost my treasure, or rather discovered its loss, I told Captain Conway enough to make him throw up his commission suddenly, and, to his great dishonour, to desert his new love ; but at the same time I intended to go with him myself to England, and act according to circumstances, that is,

to sell myself in the best market ; but then came the discovery of my loss, and he went without me, and I am positive that, if he falls into the hands of the Marquis, he will be murdered.'

" 'Will you make a confession of all this before witnesses?' I said. 'The law would reach him then.'

" 'No,' he replied, sternly. 'If you are such a coward, that you will not take it into your own hands, let what I have said be forgotten.'

" 'It might save your life, Marinier : let me try what I can do. I will speak to Doctor Dallas.'

" 'It will not avail,' he said, 'I am doomed ; and were I not, I no longer care for my life, now that I have lost my treasure and consequently my power.'

" 'If you are so obstinate, and determined to be hanged, tell me clearly what you want me to do—but if I were you, Marinier, I would not let the chance slip, slight as I confess it to be, to escape : life is sweet, Marinier.'

" 'To you it may be, but not to me,' he replied, more bitterly. 'Death has no terrors

left. A short struggle, and all is over. My body will but lie and rot in the earth as all who have gone before me have done.'

" ' But, Marinier, you have a soul.'

" He looked at me with grim astonishment, and said, " I thought we had done with hypocrisy, Monsieur Le Blanc: I thought you were one of those bold men who do not tremble at death, fearing nothing beyond the grave.'

" " And hoping nothing.'

" " Phsaw! you sicken me. I am mistaken in my man—curses on your mawkish sentimentality: have I wasted the last hours of my life talking to a pitiful driveller?"

" I do not know how it was, but, of a sudden, I lost all feeling of pity and compassion for the wretch at my feet. I saw before me but a hideous monster, not a fellow-being, who was about to die an ignominious death, and I said, maliciously:

" " I was once like you, Marinier, and did not believe in Providence. But what think you of the intervention of the Caribs at the gushing well?"

" This roused him as if he had been stung by an adder, and he said fiercely:

“ ‘Begone! lest I spit upon you, miserable driveller!’

“ I continued, without noticing him :

“ ‘I told you at the cave that I knew much, and now I tell you that not a single syllable of what you have been fool enough to confess is new to me, even to your theft of the marriage-certificate.

“ ‘I never confessed it.’

“ ‘But I knew it.

“ He glared at me like a wild beast; he gnashed his teeth, and would have sprung upon me, but for his chains.

“ ‘You have found it!’ he cried, hoarsely. ‘Where is it? Give it to me!’

“ ‘It’s of no use to you now, Marinier. Providence, Marinier, Providence has thrown it in my way, and I shall make it serviceable, not only to myself, but to my friends.’

“ ‘Renegade! traitor! liar!’ he screamed. ‘I’ll have you hanged as a spy—I’ll swear to it!’

“ ‘Ah! but who will believe you, Marinier? You are too late. Why did you not think of this before I got your pocket-book? Why, because Providence so willed it. It was the devil tempted you, Marinier, to seek your own

death. He is waiting for your soul, ripe enough for him.'

"His ravings and blasphemies now became awful, and I was inexpressibly delighted to hear the measured tramp of the guard relieving sentries. They halted in front of the building. The sergeant unlocked the door, and said, respectfully :

" 'Time is up, Sir.'

" 'All ready, sergeant,' I replied, and was quitting the dungeon, but I turned towards Marinier, and held out my hand to him, saying :

" 'Come, let us part friends.'

" 'Seize him, sergeant!' shouted the fiend :
"he's a spy—a conspirator—a cut-throat *sans culotte* ! He took the oath with me. Seize him, I say !'

" 'How now ?' replied the sergeant, whose name I afterwards found was Owens, sharply, and angrily. 'Keep a civil tongue in your head, you lying scoundrel, or I'll have you gagged. I know the gentleman well, Captain Conway's friend.'

"The sergeant then slammed the door to, drew the bolts, and turned the key, the wretch inside

still shouting and screaming ; nor did I lose the sound of his cries for some distance, and they have ever since rung in my ears.

“ As I passed the guard-room on my return to the surgeon’s quarters, Tom Connolly, who had just been relieved, came up to me, and, touching his cap, said, in his rich brogue :

“ ‘ Whisper now, yer honour ! I heard every word the blaaguard inside said ; and I’ll swear to anything yer honour likes. Begorra, but he’s a raal rapparee, bad luck to him ! and I’ll drink his health when the rope is round his neck !’

“ ‘ Here’s something to do it with,’ I answered, laughing, tossing Tom a dollar. ‘ Have you seen anything of the Carib lately ?’

“ Connolly answered in the negative. I was sorry that I could not meet with him, for surely he deserves our best thanks.”

Arthur had not attempted to interrupt his brother during this narrative, though he winced a little when he heard himself so severely handled by Marinier for his folly and weakness, but it mattered not. His enemy was dead, and his star was in the ascendant, so he made no comments.

François now passed briefly over the rest of his sojourn at Dominica. The two ladies were glad to escape from the dangers and sad reminiscences of this fatal island, and were now anxious to quit it. Their property was partly sold, and the rest placed in the hands of a trusty agent, and they embarked in the brig for England. Their voyage was prosperous, and the storm which had been so fatal to many, served to help them on their way, for it extended over the greater part of the Atlantic.

We have already seen how the two young men met. What happened afterwards we must give in narrative, and in another chapter.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Ellam had bespoken beds, and ordered supper at the 'Crown,' he went down into the stable-yard for the purpose of gleaning any information he could from the gossip of those he was likely to meet there. Under the archway of the street entrance, there was a man smoking a short pipe.

It was Bill Gaffeny.

The recognition was mutual and instantaneous.

"Hillo, Tom, is that thee?" said the man, "I been pretty nigh well tired of waiting."

"Like enough," replied Ellam; "but for the storm ye'd have waited a little longer. Why didn't thee ask about us, Bill?"

"Catch me at that," replied the poacher. "But I say, Tom! I've found it all out, and a bad job it's been too. Come this way, and I'll tell you how it was."

"Speak the worst, man, at once," said Ellam, gloomily. "Father is dead, that's it."

"Na, worse nor that."

"What the devil do you mean?"

"He been murdered out and out surely."

Ellam uttered a fierce oath.

"Go on," said he, hoarsely, "let us have it all out. No flinching, mind."

Bill Gaffeny replied in a kind of whining tone:

"Jack Briggs told it all; he had hush-money for it; vell, in spending that he got mortal lushy, and let the cat out of the bag to me one night ven we was in the beer shop, vere he puts oop ven he's tu Plymouth. Jack Briggs was stowed away snug enough behind a rock, watching for your young master, ven he seed t'ould keeper cooming sauntering along wie his goon to shoulder over the hanging-bridge in the park. Keeper stopped there some time. By-and-by a hoody, or a hawk, or some sich vermin flew over; keeper shot both barrales at un, but

didn't load agin. Just then another tall man came from the Hall side and went oop to un, and Jack Briggs says they talked very angry like for some time; just as keeper turned his back t'other man pulled out a pistol and shot un through and through. T'ould keeper staggered about the bridge foolish-like, and t'other man ran up behind and gave un a push, and he fell gun and all into the deep gully-hole vere the stream boils so; and there he be now, so Jack Briggs says. He seed the flash and smoke of the pistol, but river kicked up such a shindy he could hear no report."

"And who was the murderer, Bill Gaffeny? tell me, for by God he shall not escape!"

"T'was the foreign gentleman, him oop to Hall."

"Ha, I thought so. Can you get any proof of this, Bill? Where is Jack Briggs to be found? He must either peach, or be taken up himself. If he won't come forward, I'll set the constables on his track."

"You ouldn't do that Tom, surely?"

"Yes, but I will," replied Ellam, fiercely; "and, what is more, Bill Gaffeny, if you don't

join hand and glove with me in this business, it will be the worse for you. Remember I know something." Seeing the gipsy hesitate, Tom continued : " I'll promise from the young master to give him a hundred pounds, and the same to you for your trouble, if the murderer is brought to justice."

The poacher still hesitated.

" Come, Bill Gaffeny, do what's right. You've nothing to be afraid of, yourself; and I'll take care that Jack Briggs gets off."

" Tom, let's search the gully-hole," said the gipse, cunningly. " I know's vere to get nets and drags, and see first, if Jack Briggs's words be true."

" That we will do, too. But I must see and have a chat with Jack Briggs, first. Come, no more nonsense, Bill ; you know where he is to be found, and see him I will : so out with it at once."

" Vell," said Bill Gaffeny, as the fact of a hundred pounds began to look monstrous tempting, " I suppose Jack's to the crib still, and he'll stay lushing till he hasn't a mag left ; but no constables, Tom !"

"I'll make no such bargain, Bill Gaffeny. Father has been foully murdered, and the man whose hand did it, shall be hanged. Jack Briggs had no hand in it, himself: let him turn king's evidence; it is his only chance of getting off clear."

"Vell, come along; I'll show you the lushing crib vere Jack Briggs is, pervided you comes by yourself."

Ellam was so completely absorbed with the idea of avenging his father's murder, that he forgot our hero altogether, and left the inn-yard under the guidance of the gipsy-poacher, without even saying that he was gone out on business.

Enough of ruffianism! We will spare our readers Tom Ellam's interview with the drunken scoundrel. Thanks to the bold offer of a hundred pounds, it was completely successful. And we shall see the effects.

It was very late when Ellam returned to the 'Crown,' and our hero had long gone to bed; and before it was time to call him, on the following morning, the young keeper was in the stable-yard again, waiting for a horse to be sad-

dled for his own use. He was not alone, for two ill-looking scoundrels were standing talking together near him, with some queer-looking ropes, and other gear, in their hands. But another man appears in the yard: he, too, is waiting for a horse.

The morning was just dawning, dull and grey; and there was just sufficient light to discern people's faces, at a little distance.

As the new comer passed close to Ellam, the young keeper touched his hat. The man stopped, and looked steadfastly at him, and then held out his hand, saying:

"Come, come, Ellam, none of your aristocratical notions. It may all be very well, for a soldier to an officer, but not between fellow-citizens. Shake hands, true and faithful friend."

Ellam was deeply gratified at this expression of goodwill from his master's friend, though it was not his nature to show it much; and his mind was too occupied to reflect on the strangeness of their meeting. Yet François had both thought of and desired it.

"Whither away so early, Ellam? And who

are your companions? Not very respectable-looking ones, *ma foi* !”

“I am going to Morley Hall, Sir,” replied the keeper, in a low voice, “to look after my old father. There has been some cruel foul play going on there.”

“We can ride together, then, Ellam; for I am bound to the same place.”

“You, Sir !” said the keeper in astonishment. “You going to Morley Hall?”

“Yes, Tom, to the Hall; and if I can guess right, on some such errand as yourself.”

“Take care, Sir! take care, for God’s sake! there be dangerous customers there.”

“I am well provided, Tom,” said François, showing the butts of a brace of pistols.

“That’s right, Sir; and I shall be proud to go with you, when I have despatched these men on their errand.”

Then turning aside, he said to them, sharply:

“Take the short cut over the park, and wait for me at the hanging bridge. You will be there before me, as I must go to the village, first. No shuffling, mind.”

The two ill-looking men, carrying their queer-

looking burthens, left the yard, without saying a word, for they were cowed by Ellam's determined manner; and they knew he would act up to it. The horses were brought out, and François, followed by Ellam, rode out of the town.

What a strange coincidence! two men so different in everything, that it seemed scarcely possible they should have an object in common, starting from the same inn on the same morning, each to seek the murderer of their father, and he the murderer of both.

Ellam accompanied the young Frenchman to the lodge-gates: then, taking his horse, he returned to the village of Morley, while François proceeded, on foot, to the hall.

He rang the bell. Did his heart beat as the sound pealed through the house? Did he think with Macbeth?

“Hear it not, Marquis, for it is a knell,
That summons thee to heaven or to hell!”

A surly footman opened the door, and surveyed François suspiciously, from head to foot.

The young Frenchman was very indignant, his republican pride catching fire instantly

but he restrained himself and said, civilly : " Is Monsieur de Charolles at home ? "

" He's at breakfast," replied the man, " and I don't think he will see any stranger."

François put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a guinea.

The man's eyes glistened.

" Is Monsieur at home now ? " said the young Frenchman, laughing.

" Yes, Sir," replied the footman, " whom shall I say ? "

" Say, that a foreign gentleman, just arrived from the West Indies, wishes to see him particularly for a minute or two."

" Will you walk in, Sir, there's a seat in the hall. Beg pardon, Sir, but I dare not take you further till I've seen the Marquis."

François shook the dust off his feet as he entered the superb hall. One may imagine his feelings as, for the first time, he stood under the same roof with the murderer of his father, the enemy of his race. While the servant was gone, he did not sit down, but paced up and down on the marble pavement, his eye wandering vaguely round on the quaint, old portraits

of the Deverell family that studded the walls. Had they been the masterpieces of Vandyke, or Rembrandt, they would have attracted no more notice, for though he saw, with his eyes, his mind did not accompany them. They contemplated another picture. The servant came back.

“This way, Sir, the Marquis will see you if you don't mind waiting a few minutes.”

The footman's word struck a chord in François' heart. Wait, yes—wait years, centuries to see *him*, but he spoke not, and mechanically followed the servant.

He ushered François into a small, but snug room, where a fire was blazing cheerily.

“Take a chair, Sir, the Marquis will be down directly.”

But François did not sit down, he stood before the fire, gazing into it.

The servant quitted the room, and shut the door.

François did a strange thing. He pulled out first one pistol, opened the pan, and saw that the priming was right, and then the other, repeating the same precautions, and replaced them in his breast.

Hark ! there are footsteps. How his heart beats. The handle of the door is turned, and a tall man enters. He is past the middle age, but still upright and graceful. His black hair is just streaked with silver, and his dark eyes glitter like drops of water in the sunshine. He is simply, but neatly dressed in a suit of deep mourning, and his manner is easy and polite.

François' eye encountered his as he turned round from the fire. 'Tis he, the man with the glittering eyes, carrying off the child. Years had not dimmed their lustre. The heart of the young Frenchman bounded against his ribs. The play must be a short one.

"Whom may I have the honour of addressing?" said the Marquis, courteously, as he surveyed the young Frenchman from head to foot with his keen, black eyes.

"My name is François Devrien, at your service."

"I do not think I have ever had the honour of seeing you before. I do not even recognise the name."

"Monsieur has forgotten me, then ; we have met once before."

"You have the advantage over me Sir,"

replied the Marquis, with a low bow. "But never mind, I think you said that you had some news of importance to communicate to me? from the West Indies, I believe?"

"Yes, Monsieur, I am just come from Guadaloupe."

"Perhaps, Sir, you will be kind enough to state in a few words what it is. My time is precious."

"I have come to warn you of danger, to put you on your guard. The young man called Arthur Conway has suddenly left the West Indies, and returned to England."

"Is that all you have to tell me," said the Jesuit, with a sneer, and an altered tone. "He has taken care to let me know it himself, poor deluded young man."

"As you know the fact, I need not, I suppose, give you the message I received for you, Monsieur le Marquis."

"If it is from him, certainly not. Poor fellow! I fear he is mad. But you are mistaken in calling me Marquis, I am, as the English say, plain Mister."

"Well, then Monsieur L'Abbé."

De Charolles looked at him keenly, and said harshly: "Are you come here to insult me, Sir?"

"By no means. I wish only to ask you a few questions in return for my news."

"This is trifling, Monsieur."

"By no means," repeated François, in a calm, quiet tone. "The questions are serious ones, if you will permit me to put them."

"Do they relate to this infatuated young man?"

"On my honour as a Frenchman, no. They relate entirely to myself." François felt himself justified in saying this.

"Then if you will be brief, and the questions do not offend me, I will answer them."

"Perhaps, Monsieur," said François, slowly, and with marked emphasis, "will be so good as to tell me my father's name."

"You are pleased to be facetious, Sir," replied de Charolles becoming a little bewildered.

"Oh! I thought as Monsienr had so many names himself, he might be able to find me one."

"If this continues, I must ring the bell for the servants," said the Jesuit, more perplexed.

“Well then,” continued François, placing himself coolly between the Marquis and the bell-rope, “as you will not give me a name, I will give you several. Murderer of my father; traducer of my mother; kidnapper of their child; cruel enemy of my brother; secret, malignant viper; degraded priest; cowardly assassin—”

“I do not understand you,” said the priest, with a fearful scowl. “These are hard words, young man, and must be accounted for.”

François continued rapidly, as if soliloquizing. “I see it all before me now. The wood; the dying cavalier, bathed in his own blood; the screaming, frantic woman; the fierce murderer carrying off, on the white horse, a screaming child; the horse falls down, what a crash! the child’s head is bruised against a stone; then all is darkness. You are the man, and I am the child; and here—look here—is the scar;” and François threw back his curling hair with his hand, and showed the mark of a deep gash just above the right temple.

“You are raving, young man,” said De Charolles; “you know not what you say.”

“You did not then murder my father?”

"It is a dream."

"Nor injure my brother's fair fame?"

"I know not what you mean."

"Nor carry me off from my mother's arms?"

"Sheer folly."

"It must be a dream, as you say," said François, musingly, and passing his hand across his eyes. "But tell me, Monsieur le Marquis, were you never in Provence?"

De Charolles now turned pale, and muttered a faint "No."

"And perhaps you never knew a man called Chaumelin or Marinier?"

De Charolles' face grew livid.

"Liar, as well as assassin," said François, in a deep voice, in which passion appeared concentrated. "You have but one chance left: you may kill the son as you murdered the father. I have branded you as an assassin, a liar, a traducer; but you are still a Frenchman, do not prove yourself a coward too."

De Charolles recovered himself, a gleam of ferocity sparkling in his eyes, and said, with a bitter smile: "These accusations are so gross, and so completely without foundation, yet so

artful, that it is evident you are in league with that foolish young man, Arthur Conway, as he is improperly called. He used some such idle menaces to me but a few days since. Strong in my rectitude, I defy you both. His motives I can understand, for he is jealous ; but yours without you are in his pay, are to me incomprehensible."

"Do you understand this?" said François fiercely, as he walked deliberately up to the Marquis, and struck him a sharp blow across the face with his riding-whip, raising a large whelt upon his cheek. "Liar, murderer, coward, do you understand this, or must I repeat it?"

The Marquis uttered a sharp cry between pain and rage.

"This is too much," said he warmly. "What will you with me?"

"Ah! you are becoming reasonable, Monsieur, at last," replied François, in an altered voice. "I thought you could not be a coward."

"You wish to fight me? then. Will you name a place?"

"Yes, Monsieur le Marquis, a duel to the death," said the young Frenchman, gaily ; "and

anywhere you please, only let there be no delay. I am somewhat impatient."

"Will you give me half-an-hour? I have something to arrange; I will then be at your service."

"Can I trust you, Monsieur le Marquis?"

"On the honour of a Frenchman, you may."

"Treachery is useless. It is known to more than one individual that I am here, and you will but prolong your fate a little while, should you play me false."

"I have no such intention, believe me, Monsieur," replied the Marquis, with a look of deadly hate, and pointing to the whelt on his cheek. "This will vouch for me."

"*Au revoir*, then," said François with a bow. "I will occupy myself as well as I can till your return."

The Marquis turned towards the door, but the young Frenchman never for one moment took his eyes off him until it was closed upon his foe.

The idea that he might be himself the victim in the duel had scarcely even occurred to François, so resolved was he that the murderer of

his father should die by no other hand than his. It had never entered into his head that he was himself committing a fearful crime. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay."

And the Marquis, when he left the room, had determined that the young Frenchman should die. Who he was, puzzled him, for he would not believe that François was really the son of him he slew—of her who scorned his love. Still he knew too much, no matter how he had gained the knowledge. He must die. He went to his own room; he packed up quickly jewels and gold, not all his own, and placed them about his person. Then he carefully loaded a brace of silver-mounted pistols. This done, he took out from a velvet case a sheathed stiletto: with the greatest care he drew it forth, and looked intensely at the point. The blade was of bright steel, but the point was of a dull green colour; he returned it carefully into the brass sheath, and placed it with the pistols in his breast. A pair of sharp silver spurs hung over the mantel-piece; these he took down and buckled on his feet. Some papers that were lying about he burned, and then, with a grim

smile, he went down stairs out of the house into the stables, and with his own hand saddled and bridled the best looking horse in them, without calling a groom. He did not, however, mount it then, but returned to the house, and went back to the room, where François was waiting for him, without being seen by a single soul.

"Now, Monsieur," he said to François, his eyes flashing fire at the remembrance of the blow, "I am at your service. If you will do me the honour to accompany me, I will lead you to a spot where there is no danger of our sport being interrupted."

"Quite ready, Marquis," replied François, with great sang-froid "We have no seconds, no witnesses—ah! so much the better; no ceremonious preliminaries to adjust, no one to cry enough. You are sure the spot is screened from observation? I am trusting to your honour. What weapons do we fight with, Marquis? I quite forgot that I am the challenger, and I have no sword."

"A sword might attract attention," replied the Marquis, who had his particular reasons for avoiding that species of weapon. Pistols might

miss and he had a poniard. "Besides, in this country it is the fashion to use fire-arms. Pistols must settle our dispute."

"But they make a noise, Monsieur le Marquis," said François, coolly; he wished to discover what game his enemy was playing, and he feared treachery.

"I will, if Monsieur likes, take him where the report will not be heard."

"To the bridge across the mountain-stream, Marquis."

The dark hue of guilt spread like a pall over the Jesuit's face; but he said with a strange smile:

"Monsieur knows too much—let us end this farce."

"So be it," replied François gaily. "I follow you, Monsieur le Marquis de Charolles."

They passed through the hall without being seen, the great door was open and they entered the park. François following the footsteps of his enemy, and watching every motion.

They had to go round part of the house on their way to the bridge. The wind was blustering and raving amidst the branches of the

trees, and whirling round the corner of the building. They did not hear the approaching tramp of many feet, and the hum of many voices, for the wind drowned them.

Just as they turned the angle, the Marquis suddenly stopped, for his eyes encountered a sight he did not expect nor wish to see.

Some dozen of the villagers were coming across the lawn towards the house, carrying amongst them something lying on a rude bier covered with a sheet. In advance of them was our old friend Tom Ellam, with a constable, and just behind them the ill-looking gipsy poacher, Bill Gaffeny.

François was behind him, his retreat was cut off. The Marquis therefore advanced boldly, trusting to escape notice amongst the crowd, but he was mistaken.

"That's un." "Seize un, constable." "The bloody villain," and such-like phrases, cried some of the most eager, pressing forwards towards De Charolles.

"Hands off, base *canaille*," cried the Marquis, savagely, drawing forth a pistol and cocking it. "The first man who touches me dies."

The crowd and the constable hesitated, though Tom Ellam advanced cool and determined.

"Of what am I accused?" said De Charolles, hoarsely.

"Of murder," "murder," "murder," came in different accents from many voices.

"And who accuses me?"

"I," said Tom Ellam, boldly; "the son of him you so brutally and cowardly murdered. See here!" and he removed the sheet, and disclosed the corpse of old Ellam.

"I know you not," replied the Marquis, contemptuously.

"But I know you well, master," said Bill Gaffeny, coming forward.

"And I saw him fire the shot," said a voice in the crowd.

"Who speaks?" said the Marquis; "what raven croaks there?"

"I! Jack Briggs! I saw you do it."

De Charolles face grew livid. He turned to François, and said, in an accent, that no pen can describe, so cutting, so expressive of deadly hate, and withering sarcasm was it, though the

words were few and simple : "This is your doing, Monsieur."

"On my honour, no!" replied François, eagerly. "Had I my wish, you should die by no hand but mine."

A strange expression passed over the face of the accused one, and he said : "Who are you, then, in truth, who thus seeks my death?"

"I am the son of her you basely slandered, Eugenie de la Motte ; of him you stabbed in the wood, near Marseilles."

"You hear him?" said the Marquis to the crowd.

"I am the brother of him you have deprived of his inheritance—of him you would have murdered, as you did my father."

"You hear him?" said the Marquis again.

The crowd stood agape ; they expected some strange confession to follow. No one moved.

"Is this true," said the Marquis ; "or is this a story concocted by the young man, Arthur Conway?"

"It is true," replied François, solemnly. "Your agent, Marinier, confessed it to me before he was hanged."

"All—did he tell you all? Your father's name?"

"No; but I can guess it."

"How?"

"The marriage certificate you stole, proves it sufficiently."

"Ha! it is found, then?"

"Yes; and Arthur Conway triumphs, and his mother is avenged!"

"Then, you must die for him."

And with a quick and sudden motion, De Charolles drew out a pistol. A cry burst from the crowd. They saw the flash, and the smoke; but no one fell.

For while the Marquis was thus strangely interrogating the young Frenchman; Tom Ellam, fearing some treachery, had stolen gently up, unperceived, behind his back, and watched his every motion. When suddenly, the murderer placed his hand in his breast, and drew forth the pistol; the young keeper threw himself on him, with a quick spring and a loud cry. He was only just in time; the weapon was presented, the trigger was pulled, but the bullet went wide of its object.

A shattering of glass accompanied, rather than followed the report.

A wild female shriek echoed it.

And then there was a short, but awful pause. For a moment the Marquis was staggered; he reeled about, and something fell from his breast.

Bill Gaffeny darted forward, and picked it up. But the struggle was of short duration; with one powerful effort of his sinewy frame, he cast off the young keeper, strong and active as he was, as a lion shakes off a bull-dog.

He spoke no more, but his eye was unflinching; his lips did not even quiver, as he again put his hand to his breast. The poniard was gone; there remained but the other pistol. Fortunate chance for François.

The Marquis drew it out.

Again the crowd shrieked.

But this time the murderer turned the muzzle to his own heart, and pulled the trigger.

For one second the body of the Marquis stood upright, and then with a crash he fell forward on his face.

There was a solemn silence for a moment.

Again a woman's cry broke it.

The crowd closed round the fallen Marquis. They raised him up, and in a moment laid him down again on his back, for he was dead.

François gazed for a moment on the distorted features of his prostrate enemy, and said: "Arthur, dear Arthur, thy foes are falling fast. Two! One yet remains. I will not spare him, for I have made no promise;" and he turned towards the entrance of the house.

The door was open. Everything was already in confusion; servants hurrying about hither and thither, amazed and bewildered. No one opposed his entrance.

A young lady came suddenly out of a room, and rushed across the hall.

François did not know her, but with the instinctive feelings of a gentleman, he drew back, and made her a low bow.

The young lady was evidently violently agitated, for at first she did not even perceive him, and was hurrying past him towards the door, crying for help.

François saw this at a glance, and he stepped forward at once, saying: "I do not know, Mademoiselle, whom I have the honour of addressing, but can I be of any service to you?"

She looked at him with amaze and bewilderment, and passed her hand across her brow, and said: "The voice is that of Arthur Conway, but the features are not his. Tell me in mercy who you are, and what you want here?"

"I seek Sir Walter Conway," replied François, answering only the latter part of her question.

"Help, help," she cried, "whoever you are; my father is dying. Run for a surgeon; lose not a moment, I beseech you."

"I am a stranger, Mademoiselle," he said hurriedly; "I will send Ellam at once, on horseback; he knows the roads, and will be quicker than I can be."

"Yes, yes, Ellam will go; but be quick, I pray you."

François ran out into the open air, and called to Ellam.

The keeper came to him.

"Saddle a horse at once, and ride for the nearest doctor, Ellam," said François. "The Baronet is taken with a fit: he is dying."

"There is one ready saddled and all, in the stable," said one of the grooms. "I looked in

just now, and seen un ; he maun have saddled heself though."

"Bring him out then," said the young keeper, and in a few minutes he was gallopping off in search of a doctor.

François returned to the house.

A servant met him in the hall, and taking him for the doctor, said : "This way, Sir, master is going fast, if he be not dead already."

François did not undeceive him. He had a strange and morbid wish to behold the face of Arthur's last enemy ere he died. Two, and this the third, and he the brother of him they had so fearfully wronged, present at their last moments upon earth.

He entered the library. The table was covered with breakfast-things, not yet touched. And who was it that had come, like a harpy, to scare away those who should have eaten them ? Who but he—

Lying upon the floor, with the head resting in the lap of the young lady who had met him in the hall, was the lifeless form of an old grey-headed man. The pallor of death had already spread over the face ; the jaw was sunk, and the eyes fixed. Sir Walter Conway was dead.

We must imagine what ensued, for it will not do to bring prominently forward a new character at this period of our story; but it subsequently became known to Arthur that his cousin Louisa was standing at the library window, which looked out towards the stream. She saw a number of people coming across the park towards the hall, bearing something amongst them. Her curiosity was aroused, and she remained at the window.

She heard the horrid cry of "Murder, murder, murder," raised by the crowd, and she saw the body brought forward on the rude bier and uncovered; but not till then did she see a figure, with its back towards the house, confronting the Marquis, and she thought it was Arthur. She saw the pistol drawn out, and presented at the figure, and she shrieked aloud.

Then came the smashing of the glass and the whizzing of the bullet.

This startled and alarmed her father.

"What is all this, Louisa?" he said, querulously.

"I cannot understand it," she replied. "They seem to be arresting De Charolles: they point to a corpse; they cry 'Murder.'"

"Come away, foolish girl," said the old man. "You are telling falsehoods."

"No, no; it is the truth, father," she continued still, looking out of the window. "Look, look! he would have shot poor Arthur. That's Ellam! Well done; he has thrown himself upon the Marquis; and now, see! see! Merciful God! he points the pistol to his own breast."

Almost simultaneously with the second pistol report, there was a dull heavy falling sound behind her.

Instantaneously she turned round, and a second shriek burst from her lips.

The old man was stretched on the floor in the agonies of death. He had attempted to rise, or the convulsive struggles of nature had thrown him forwards out of his chair.

She ran to him, and raised his head. His face was blackened and distorted, the eyes starting from the sockets, and there was foam on his thin lips. Terrified! she let the head fall, and rushed into the hall, where she met François.

* * * *

Little now remains to be told.

The coroner's jury returned a verdict on the three bodies. They found that the old keeper had been wilfully murdered by the deceased Marquis de Charolles, who had committed *felo-de-se*, and that Sir Walter Conway had died by the visitation of God.

The funeral of the Baronet was very quiet ; that of old Ellam was attended by nearly every inhabitant of the parish of Morley, and the body of the self-murdered was buried at the meeting of four roads, with a stake run through it.

Poor old Ellam was right ; a will, dated 1st of November, '95, was found ; in which, after settling a small jointure on his widow, and bequeathing five thousand pounds to his youngest daughter, Louisa, everything was left to Edith, and to her issue, by the Marquis de Charolles, provided he took the name and arms of the Conways. Arthur was not even mentioned.

As may be supposed, there was no little difficulty and delay, in collecting and arranging the proper proofs for maintaining Arthur's claim to Morley. His legitimacy was, however, established, and in the end he succeeded both to

the title and the estates, as the heir to his uncle, Sir Walter Conway.

The mortgages on the Grange were redeemed, and this estate, which was found to be entailed on the male heir, was made over to the Dowager Lady Conway, for her life. Need we say, that he made a handsome provision for his cousin Louisa.

Many curious and interesting points of law, no doubt, would, or might have arisen, had there been any one to dispute Arthur's claim to the succession; but there was no opposition, and he escaped Chancery.

And now, Arthur himself, as if to complicate the question, and to prove the futility, we will not call it wickedness of Sir William Deverell's will, in marking, so strongly, the distinctiveness of creeds in a Christian country, had taken to his bosom a Catholic wife—not a bigotted one, certainly, for she allowed her children to be brought up as Protestants, but deeply attached to it as the religion of her forefathers.

François de la Motte and his lovely wife remained for some years in England; but when the blazing star of the Emperor shone dazzlingly

over France, he returned to his native country, and entered his service. He did not, however, rise very high, for though the lovely Creole and her charming children were much noticed by the Empress Josephine, and though he greatly distinguished himself in the campaigns on the continent against the Austrians, his constant refusal to fight against the English, those stumbling blocks in the path of his mighty master, brought him eventually into disgrace. He was permitted to retire from the service, and, changing the sword for the ploughshare, he lived very happily with Rosalie and her lovely children at the large farm near Fréjus in Provence.

The faithful Tom Ellam courted and won the no less faithful Dinah Derrick, and raised up a sturdy generation in the keeper's lodge of Morley Hall, which, with a good piece of land, was confirmed to him and his successors by his grateful young master, who, however, never would regard him as a servant, much to Ellam's annoyance at times.

What became of the kind surgeon we are not informed, nor of our friend Tom Connolly. It is to be hoped, however, that they escaped the

thousand-and-one jaws of death that yawned for them in the tropics.

* * * * *

It is a lovely summer evening, such only as England knows, though the morning has been stormy. The light westerly breeze is gently rustling the leaves of the wide-spreading oaks. The dappled deer are one by one withdrawing leisurely and gracefully from their grateful shade. There is a distant sound of falling waters. The birds are singing merrily in the flowery thorn-bushes. There is a hum of bees as they dart from blossom to blossom. There is a fresh perfume in the air. Everything seems full of life, and joy, and fragrance.

This summer evening is the type of the hearts of those two who are seated under yon stately oak.

A lovely little girl of two years old, with blue eyes, and golden hair, is playing at their feet.

Her name is Edith.

"Ah, Marguerite! were not Rosalie's words prophetic?"

"What words, dear Arthur?"

“Did she not say, dearest, when gloom and despair were on my soul, these hopeful, cheering words : ‘What you have lost by love, you shall regain by love.’ And is it not so, my own, sweet Marguerite?” and he threw his arms round her and kissed her fondly.

A world of love shone in the eyes of the fair young wife as she returned his caress, and said :

“We are indeed blessed in everything, dear Arthur ; but let us never forget him whom Providence permitted to be the humble instrument of our preservation. Arthur, let us never forget the Carib !”

THE END.

LONDON :

Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.



YB 74790

